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THE DREAM
OF
AN ENGLISHMAN.

BY
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LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT & Co., LIMITED,
4, STATIONERS' HALL COURT, E.C.
WARRINGTON: "SUNRISE" PUBLISHING Co.
1893.

PRINTED BY
THE "SUNRISE" PUBLISHING CO., WARRINGTON.
DECEMBER, 1892.

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DEDICATION.

In secret I have nursed a dream,
In silence I have seen it grow ;
If, in the telling, it should seem
A thing of folly, be it so.
Yet fain am I to "serve the state,"
And faith in England feeds my pen ;
And so my dream I dedicate
To all true-hearted Englishmen.

But not to Englishmen alone :
Three nations share our destiny,
And continents rejoice to own
The same stupendous rule as we ;
" Humanity " itself, I hold,
" Is hanging breathless on " our " fate " ;
And so my dream, " in trembling told,"
To these I also dedicate.

FOREWORDS.

A PEOPLE'S voice ! we are a people yet,
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers ;
Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love and reverence and regret
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control ;
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
And save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ;
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.

Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington : Tennyson.

As for the Colonies, we purpose through Heaven's blessing to retain them a while yet ! Shame on us for unworthy sons of brave fathers if we do not. Brave fathers, by valiant blood and sweat, purchased for us, from the bounty of Heaven, rich possessions in all zones ; and we, wretched imbeciles, cannot do the function of administering them ? And because the accounts do not stand well in the ledger, our remedy is, not to take shame to ourselves, and repent in sackcloth and ashes, and amend our beggarly imbecilities and insincerities in that as in other departments of our business, but to fling the business overboard, and declare the business itself to be bad ? We are a hopeful

set of heirs to a big fortune ! It does not suit our Manton gunneries, grouse-shootings, mousings in the City ; and like spirited young gentlemen we will give it up, and let the attorneys take it ? . . . They are portions of the general Earth, where the children of Britain now dwell ; where the gods have so far sanctioned their endeavour, as to say that they have a right to dwell. England will not readily admit that her own children are worth nothing but to be flung out of doors ! England looking on her Colonies can say : “ Here are lands and seas, spice-lands, corn-lands, timber-lands, overarched by zodiacs and stars, clasped by many-sounding seas : wide spaces of the Maker’s building, fit for the cradle yet of mighty Nations and their Sciences and Heroisms. Fertile continents still inhabited by wild beasts are mine, into which all the distressed populations of Europe might pour themselves, and make at once an Old World and a New World human. By the eternal fiat of the gods, this must yet one day be ; this, by all the Divine Silences that rule this Universe, silent to fools, eloquent and awful to the hearts of the wise, is incessantly at this moment, and at all moments, commanded to begin to be. Unspeakable deliverance, and new destiny of thousandfold expanded manfulness for all men, dawns out of the Future here. To me has fallen the godlike task of initiating all that : of me and of my Colonies, the abstruse Future asks, ‘ Are you wise enough for so sublime a destiny ? Are you too foolish ? ’ ”

Latter-Day Pamphlets : Carlyle.

Till the war-drum throb’d no longer, and the battle-flags
were fur’d

In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

Locksley Hall : Tennyson.

THE DREAM OF AN ENGLISHMAN.

CHAPTER I.

JOHN BULL AND HIS FAMILY.

JOHN BULL was getting old. And he had a very large family. And he was very proud of them. Some of them were growing up to maturity, and were like their father every inch. Some of them were only children. Some of them he had kidnapped, some of them he had adopted, and some of them were born to him in lawful wedlock. But he loved them every one.

There was Taffy, who lived under the same roof, and was, ¹with one exception, the oldest of them all. He was, however, rather bigoted in his opinions, and had a stupid way of talking in a language which nobody

1 The Channel Islands.

but himself could understand ; was fond of cheese and chapels, was supposed to have a taste for poetry, and had begun to develop a decided objection to paying his debts. But he was a very worthy fellow in the main. The spirit of his mountains was reflected in his character. He had a passionate love of freedom ; had fought long and earnestly to retain it ; and, failing through no fault of his own, had finally made friends with his conqueror, stood by his side on many a bloody battle-field, and proved himself, in a hundred ways, a most useful member of the family.

There was Sandy, whom John had vainly tried to thrash, and who, at last, became a member of the family by giving John a king, and virtually annexing him, a circumstance of which he naturally boasted. Anyhow, the two agreed remarkably well, and all that Sandy asked was to be left to his bagpipes, his Burns, and his whisky ; to keep the "Sawbath ;" and to be able to drive a keen bargain. He was very brave, this Sandy. The struggles of his early years had left their mark upon him ; in war, his charge was always of the fiercest ; and every realm in Europe had felt the prowess of his sword, and

shuddered at the summons of his pibroch. And in peace he had his "victories no less renowned than war." To every shore his sons had penetrated, and every wind had listened to the strains of "auld lang syne." And, wherever he went, he always seemed to prosper, and, however long he lived, he never ceased to think of the hills his feet had trod in childhood, and the kirk beneath whose ivied shade the ashes of his sires reposed.

Then there was Pat, a quarrelsome fellow who had had a very unhappy time of it. John had stolen him, and treated him shamefully into the bargain. He had left him to starve, and robbed him, beaten him, and fondled him in turn; and, finding him refractory in consequence of his wretched bringing up, he had used the rod and almost spoilt the child. Latterly, he had fed him with sweetmeats one day and skilly the next. And Pat was sullen and dissatisfied because he was misunderstood. A better fellow never breathed when rightly treated. He was the soul of hospitality, as frank and open as the day, brimming over with wit and good nature, an orator without an equal, and a patriot to the backbone. Moreover, he was animated by a courage

which adversity was impotent to tame. But John had driven him into desperate courses ; he had ceased to respect the Commandments, and, in his anger, more than once had stained his hands with blood. He talked about abandoning the family, and either throwing in his lot with Brother Jonathan, or setting up house for himself. As usual, John had recognized his folly when the mischief was accomplished, and was doing everything he reasonably could to atone for his blunders. But Pat was sullen, and had stipulated for terms, as the price of his reconciliation, which John, in common prudence, could not see his way to grant.

The four resided in the same establishment. But John had many children who had left him, and started branch establishments across the sea. And he had added to his family a multitude of every creed and colour, and in every continent, and was doing his best to see to their education and to fill his pockets at their expense.

There was Canada, his eldest daughter ; and a strapping lass she was. For she had been reared amid the snows of a northern climate, accustomed from the cradle to bear all sorts of weather, and to face all sorts of danger, forced, in her girlhood, to fight for her very existence, and neglected and

snubbed until she began to grow to maturity, and to excite the envy and the admiration, not alone of Brother Jonathan, but of every other nation capable of appreciating beauty, admiring high spirit, or—shall it be said?—coveting the enormous estate which was her dowry.

Close beside her lived her little sister, Newfoundland, a young lady who liked a good deal of her own way, and pretended to be rather fond of the aforesaid Brother Jonathan, a gentleman who understood the art of ogling.

Further off was Australia, who inhabited a continent every inch of which belonged to her, a continent which she considered to be altogether too valuable to be set apart for the criminals whose room her worthy father much preferred to their company. Australia was not less beautiful than Canada, and she dwelt in a serener clime. And oceans sundered her from every neighbour, and her youth had been comparatively peaceful, and, amid her flocks and herds, or wading through her rivulets bestrewn with gold, she had become a very rich and independent damsel indeed.

She had a sweetly pretty sister called Tasmania, who lived in the same climate, and much resembled her father ; and another, still more lovely, called

New Zealand, whose home was in some islands several hundred miles away.

There was Africa, a big, dark girl with mystery in her eyes ; a girl who had a sublime contempt for drapery, but loved to adorn her dusky limbs with feathers and with diamonds. It was only of late that people had begun to take much notice of her. She was an outcast in the family of nations, and they had been content to leave her to hunt the lions in her trackless wildernesses, and to murder the missionaries who had come to teach her their "philosophy of clothes." But John had cast wistful eyes upon her for many years, and he was a good deal put about when Johnny Schmoker and Johnny Crapaud commenced to pay her attention, together with eligible Italy, and dapper little Belgium, and bankrupt Portugal, and "the unspeakable Turk," with various other less important suitors. Johnny Crapaud seized one hand and Johnny Schmoker the other ; Italy asked for a lock of her hair ; Belgium wanted a bangle ; and poor little Portugal (who was of a passionate turn) grew quite excited because she would not give him all he asked for. But John, with his usual effrontery, managed to get his arm

round her waist ; and, although they agreed to share her love and tolerate each others rivalry without calling for coffee and pistols, it seemed manifest that the arrangement could not last very long.

There was India, a swarthy maiden who was continually falling out with her own fingers and thumbs, and whom John had taken upon himself to reduce to reason. ¹ He would have told you that he had gone to visit her from motives of benevolence. Cynics might have thought that the jewels which adorned her ancient shrines, the cotton which flourished in her plantations, the tea which decked her mountain slopes, and the fruit, and grain, and skins, and ivory which abounded within the borders of her "coral strand" had something to do with the matter. But philanthropists always are misunderstood. And it must, in common fairness, be admitted that, when once he had subdued her, John treated her remarkably well. With a tact which she

¹ "I was speaking of the English spirit of colonisation one day at a lecture, and in the course of my remarks on the subject, I took the liberty of saying, not without a slight touch of satire : 'When John Bull makes colonies, it is for the good of the natives.' 'For their goods !' cried a jolly Briton from the gallery."

The Dear Neighbours !—Max O'Rell.

was not slow to appreciate, he allowed her to retain her rings and ornaments, to cling to the castes she cherished with a folly second only to his own—for there were castes, alas! in John Bull's island, too—and, in short, to walk with little hindrance in the immemorial ways. But he showed her a more excellent way. And, under his firm, but fatherly, rule, she gradually became less prone to let her "angry passions rise;" she began to learn the arts of civilization; to eschew the barbarism of a tragic past; and to turn her weary eyes from the waning "Light of Asia" to the waxing "Light of the World." John had great hopes for India.

Nestling at her naked feet, was sunny Ceylon, whose breath was sweet with spices, and, across the adjacent bay, there crouched benighted Burmah, and the busy settlements along the Straits, with part of savage Borneo, and little Labuan, and wild New Guinea (half in love with Johnny Schmoker), and, further north, a "Heathen Chineese" who was known to everybody as Hong Kong. Then there were Jamaica and her sisters, with their woolly-headed children and their teeming sugar-fields, and, in the same locality, Guiana, with her gold, and cotton, and

tobacco, and, half hidden in her forests of mahogany, her neighbour, Honduras. Close by, there lay the beautiful Bermudas, and everywhere one came upon some minor member of the family—Heligoland, that faced the might of Germany unmoved (exchanged, of late, for some six hundred thousand miles of Africa, for John had always an eye to a bargain); a favourite little *Man* who had a pleasant home of his own in the middle of the private family fish-pond; the lovely Jersey and her next-of-kin; Gibraltar, on her rocky seat, and Malta, in the Middle Sea, and Cyprus, “an enchanted island;” with arid Aden, and the wicked Andamans, and sweet Mauritius, and her friends, the Seychelles, and the happy islets of Fiji—not to mention Master Lagos, the lonely Falklands, the hermit, Ascension, and melancholy saint Helena. And even these did not exhaust the list, for half the icy shores of Greenland owned John’s sway, and scores of less important places were included in his scattered family, and stood like sentinels in every sea to guard his interests and uphold the honour of his flag.

More than three hundred and fifty million sons of Adam (as good people murmured), or descend-

ants of the ape (as learned men, with quite unnecessary emphasis, affirmed), abode upon his vast estates, and still the cry arose, "Yet there is room!" for those estates were fifty-two times the size of Germany, fifty-three times the size of France, and larger than three Europes; they occupied eleven million miles; and they covered one-fifth of the world's entire area. "The time would fail me to tell of" their immense resources—of their inexhaustible fertility, their unparalleled diversity of climate, and their rich variety of soil. Upon them, as John loved to claim, "the sun never set;" he had "dotted over the surface of the whole globe with" his "possessions and military posts, whose morning drum-beat following the sun, and keeping company with the hours, circled the earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England." The colonies of Greece were insignificant beside the colonies of John, and "regions Cæsar never knew" were proud to own him as their lord and master. The Celestial Empire, with its hoary civilizations, could not hold a candle to his own, despite the overwhelming numbers of its pig-tailed population; and "Holy Russia," though in area she ran John close, was crushed beneath a cruel despotism, and

cowered amid her steppes, or shivered in her northern snows, a realm without a soul. The only other realm deserving to be named with John's belonged to Brother Jonathan, and that was barely more than a fourth of the size. Small wonder, then, that John was given to boasting, for he was the owner of "an Empire of liberty extending into every quarter of the globe," and almost everything the heart of man could wish for might be had within the borders of his vast domain.

But, proud as the old man was of his possessions, he had never fully realized his wealth until, one day, his children agreed to send to the metropolis a few specimens of their enterprize, and ask him to examine them for himself. And so he visited the palace which their skill and patriotism had reared, and saw, in admirable sequence, all the riches which his affluent prairies and broad forests yielded, and the dazzling treasures which the gnomes had hidden for his delight in dusky mines, or strewn along swift water-courses, and all the countless trophies of the chase, the shining harvests of the sea, the fabrics woven on immemorial looms, in climes afar, and the

products of swart handicraftsmen and of pale-faced artizans whose cunning had not failed them though ten thousand miles divided them from home. And, wiping his brow with the exertion of merely visiting it all, John murmured with the Queen of Sheba—for he was rather proud of his knowledge of Scripture—that “the half” had “not been told” him; no, nor the twentieth part.

They called this family gathering in his ancient capital the “Kith and Kineries;” and John, as the band struck up “God Save The Queen,” walked proudly from the flashing fountains, and the golden archways, and the diamond-fields, and all the rich display of wool and cotton, and of fruit and corn, and, with a voice that was husky with emotion, murmured, “Bless you, my children!”

CHAPTER II.

THE "WEARY TITAN'S" VOW.

John woke up, one morning, in a fever. He had previously been fidgeted a good deal by the turn affairs were taking. Whilst he was hugging the idea to his breast that he was a very fortunate old gentleman to be the possessor of so fine an estate, some of his advisers had been trying to prove that he was in his dotage, and that all his ideas as to the value of that estate were illusory. One of them had announced that his Empire was a ¹ "barbarous, blood-stained fetish," "a Cerberus of which India, Australia, and Canada were the three unnatural heads." ² Another had said that he should not object to the loss of Canada in the least, and that it would be better for him and better for her ; and ³ a third had calmly recommended her to throw in her lot with Brother Jonathan, and leave John to himself. ⁴ A fourth

1 Mr. Cobden. 2 Mr. Bright. 3 Sir C. W. Dilke. 4 Professor
Freeman.

had preached the startling doctrine, "Perish India," and many others had enunciated scarcely less unpatriotic views. Even so great a statesman as Lord Palmerston had been infected by the prevailing indifference. "Come upstairs with me, Helps, when the council is over," said he, on taking the post of Colonial Secretary. "We will look at the maps, and you shall show me where these places are." And many stoutly maintained that the Empire was an incubus.

It was pointed out to John that his children did not contribute anything to his exchequer, but, on the contrary, were a continual drain upon his resources ; that they increased a hundredfold his liability to war, and were not of any substantial advantage to him in time of peace. The gold which poured into his pockets upon the adoption of free trade had rather tended to confirm their arguments ; and they did their best to show him that it was his duty to make his island "the workshop of the world," and that his highest ambition might be limited to seeing it become "a nation of shop-keepers." With the ships of all lands in his ports, and the red fires of a thousand Infernos roaring in his pleasant shires, and covering his smiling fields with smoke, why

should he trouble himself about his children oversea ?—what had he to do with the Greater Britains that were gradually arising in fairer climes and under sunnier skies ?

“Click your money-bags, John Bull, and let the Empire fall”

was the sage advice they gave him ; and the wonder was that both money-bags and Empire did not go together, so assiduously had they endeavoured to befool him.

But, somehow, he did not see it. Year by year his broad dominions grew, and every year he learned to prize them more. The roar of the furnace and the whirring of the loom had not, as yet, become the *summum bonum* of the old man's dream ; and it gradually dawned on him that the stones which his pseudo-statesmen “rejected” might one day “become the head of the corner.” And the more he thought the matter over the more he was satisfied that, in spite of all their sinister prognostications, Oceana was a heritage too noble to be flung aside. And he began to nurse a secret dream that Destiny had wondrous things in store for him and her. At first, he felt a little ashamed of it in face of the opinions of “these philosophical and academical Radicals who were the friends of

“every country but their own.” He had been taught to regard them as “men of light and leading,” who were quite above such petty prejudices as patriotism, and based their arguments upon a certain unassailable science known as political economy; and they had promised him a reign of universal brotherhood if only he could see his way to take the tax off corn. It was a “philosophy” with large “assumptions,” and the facts did not appear to bear it out; but that, of course, was “so much the worse for the facts.”

Happily, there were certain individuals in John's household who did not pretend to be philosophers, and were content with being Englishmen; and some of these were bold enough to make a stand against the new gospel.

“We” were “not cotton-spinners all,
And “some” loved “England and her honour yet.”

And they believed in her expansion, and had faith in her future, and vaguely saw that Oceana yet might dominate the world.

And presently there arose a man who grasped the splendour of the conception to the full. They called him “Dizzy” and, at first,

mistrusted him ; but seldom in his history had any of John's children wrought for him so well. He added largely to John's heritage ; he called the dusky sons of India from their eastern home to show John's rivals that behind him stood a force whose limits none could measure, and of whose existence they had scarcely dreamed ; with wonderful diplomacy, he stopped the haughty Czar of all the Russias at the gates of Constantinople, and brought us "peace with honour" and without a blow ; and then he unfolded a new banner, and, with admiring eyes, John read upon its splendid folds the noble motto, " Empire and Liberty."

But " Dizzy " (now an Earl) had neglected John's domestic comfort somewhat, and, once or twice, he had blundered by his over-boldness. And John's children were " mostly fools," as one of them had told him, and, in an evil hour, they turned poor " Dizzy " out of Downing Street.

And, thenceforward, John had never had any peace, nor any honour either, for the matter of that. Day by day he had arisen to read of some catastrophe. Now it was Pat who was in a pickle.

Then it was Africa that was in a ferment. He seemed to be always fighting, and never getting any benefit from the strife. A realm as large as France was lost under circumstances of accumulated disaster and disgrace. A city as big as Bristol was reduced to ashes. An army was annihilated in the deserts of the Soudan, and a dozen little armies left to almost certain death in scattered garrisons unnumbered miles away. To crown the shameful tale, the knightliest of England's sons was sent to guard a jewel on the breast of Africa, and left to perish there ; whilst British blood was shed like water in a war against a nation " struggling to be free." Moreover, India's tranquillity had been disturbed by constant apprehensions that the Russian bear was prowling on her northern borders with malevolent intent, and, once, her warders met him face to face and almost came to blows.

No wonder that John's sleep had been restless ; that he had been disturbed by horrid dreams ; and that he sighed for the servant on whose grave the primroses were blossoming. But when, upon the morning I have mentioned, he discovered that the " Grand Old Man", who had told him that Pat's favourite representative was " marching through

rapine to the disintegration and dismemberment of the Empire", had suddenly resolved to join him in the march, and that the two had sworn eternal friendship, his indignation knew no bounds. And he promptly sent the "Grand Old Man" about his business.

And everything seemed to get on much better without him. John's taxes lessened and his debts decreased. His trade expanded and his Empire grew. In less than six years, more than two million square miles had been added to his territory. And there was not any war, nor any insult either. All nations knew that it was dangerous to treat him with contumely now. And hence he was at peace with all, and prospered mightily. And, free from the nightmare which had afflicted him when hands less capable were at the helm, John was able to turn his thoughts to "the old house at home," and to set it in order by effectuating various economies and not a few most valuable reforms. Across the Channel, too, affairs were growing gradually brighter. The phantom of an independent parliament on College Green had almost ceased to trouble him. And John began again to "take" his "ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

But he was astounded, one day, to read, at

breakfast, that the separation which had been temporarily averted at home seemed imminent abroad. There was another "Grand Old Man" across the sea. For many years he had been the chosen citizen of Canada—"the Chief," they fondly called him—and well and wisely had he exercised the trust. But Brother Jonathan had fallen in love with that northern damsel. And this is how he wooed her :

¹ LOVE-SONG.

"O Canada, sweet Canada,
Thou maiden of the frost,
From Flattery Cape to Sable Cape
With love for thee we're crossed.
We could not love thee less nor more,
We love thee clear to Labrador ;
Why should we longer thus be vexed ?
Consent, coy one, to be annexed.

"O Canada, sweet Canada,
Our heart is always true ;
You know we never really cared
For any one but you.
Your veins are of the purest gold
(We've mined them some, the truth be told),
True wheat are you, spite chaff and scorn,
And O, your dainty ears (of corn).

¹ I am indebted for these clever verses to the "Century." The author is Charles Henry Phelps.

"O Canada, sweet Canada,
John Bull is much too old
For such a winsome lass as you,—
Leave him to fuss and scold ;
Tell him a " neighbour " you will be,
He loves you not so much as we ;
Fair maiden, stand not thus perplexed,
Come, sweetheart, come and be annexed."

But she had rejected his advances with contempt. However, her coyness only seemed to stimulate his ardour, and he resolved, at all hazards, to gain his end. So he harassed her fishermen, and plagued her farmers, and refused to allow her to sell in his markets unless she would trade with him on terms which she denied to John, thinking, in this manner, to starve her into submission.

But her " Grand Old Man " exposed the artifice, and refused with scorn to treat John Bull so shabbily. And John's heart throbbed and his eye moistened to see " the Chief " denounce the treason, and proudly tell his fellow-countrymen : " A British subject I was born, a British subject I will die." And, though it pinched their pockets, and imposed upon them no small sacrifice, the majority of the children of Canada stood by him bravely, and declared that

they, too, would have been ashamed to turn their backs upon their father in this fashion.

John Bull, however, was greatly exercised by the discovery that some of them had been disposed, under stress of circumstances, to contemplate desertion. He had watched the Elections with breathless interest, and his heart was in his mouth until the result had been announced. And, even then, he was not by any means satisfied. The majority was small. The ruse of Jonathan had evidently been to some extent successful. It was patriotism *versus* "the almighty dollar," and the latter began to tell. "Suppose," thought John, "that it should triumph? Suppose my northern daughter *should* be lured 'by sordid means and mecenary proffers' from her 'allegiance.' Suppose she should indulge in a runaway match, and marry for money?"

And the old gentleman was sorely troubled by the prospect. And, to make matters worse, at this particular juncture, Death stepped in and robbed her of her ablest counsellor. "The Chief" had fallen in the hour of victory, but further dangers threatened, and there was not anybody competent to take his place.

And, in the midst of John's anxieties on account of Canada, her little sister, Newfoundland, began to give herself airs. Many years before, when her island home was one huge wilderness, Johnny Crapaud had acquired, by treaty, certain rights of fishing there which were innocuous in her infancy, but which began to operate very injuriously as she gradually grew in wealth and enterprize. She was not mistress on her own shores, and she naturally felt the hardship. Her fishermen and those of France were frequently coming into collision, and it was only owing to the tact of the naval officers of John and Johnny that an open rupture was avoided. Various means had been tried to compose the quarrel, but hitherto without avail. At this juncture, the Marquis of *Cum-grano-Salisbury*, who was rapidly becoming the great international peacemaker, hit upon the happy expedient of referring the dispute to arbitration. That Johnny had treaty rights which John was bound in honour to respect was indisputable. That Johnny was disposed to insist upon them to the full was not less clear. That they were irksome to Newfoundland was evidenced by her chronic irritation. Unquestionably, then, the wisest course was to obtain an authoritative definition of Johnny's rights,

and afterwards to endeavour to arrange with him for their surrender at a reasonable price, or in exchange for a reciprocal concession in some other quarter of the globe. In the meantime, John was bound to carry out his ancient covenant, and to insist upon the preservation of order.

But Newfoundland suddenly became intractable. She declined to pass the necessary act to enable John to put the treaty in force. And, when he calmly, but firmly, explained that this was his absolute duty, and that the only alternative was to go to war with Johnny without a leg to stand upon, she became hysterical, and called him names, and, like a naughty child, began to say she wouldn't play, and would run away to Uncle Jonathan.

John was much upset by her attitude. He was very fond of her, admired her spirit, and sympathized with the difficulties of her situation. But what was he to do? At last, she sent some of her most trusted advisers to the bar of his Gilded Chamber to plead her cause, and patiently the peers of England heard their tale. And everything that it was possible to do to soothe her injured feelings and convince her of her

father's love was freely done ; but John made it very clear that he must observe his obligations, and that he had expected Newfoundland, as a dutiful daughter, to assist him in the task.

To add to Newfoundland's vexation, he had refused to ratify a treaty which she had made with her uncle in regard to their commercial intercourse, as he considered that it was grossly unfair to Canada. And in this matter, at any rate, she really had not anyone to blame but herself. She had obstinately declined to throw in her lot with her big sister, and now, of course, she had to pay the penalty. And John was doubtless in the right. But the situation was very grave, and, though he would rather have permitted Newfoundland to quit the paternal roof and fly to Brother Jonathan, or start in life for herself, than have broken faith with his friend and neighbour, Johnny, he regarded the possibility with feelings of the keenest pain.

Ultimately, however, Newfoundland began to show her better side, and, after a good deal of unnecessary ill-blood had been engendered, she offered, through her ambassadors, to submit to the conditions which John declared to be essential

in order to secure a satisfactory settlement of the dispute. And they returned convinced, he thought, that, though his manner might have seemed a trifle harsh, at first, his only object, all along, had been to do his best for all concerned, and, especially for her, his suffering and high-spirited daughter. And everything seemed about to come to a happy ending.

But, much to John's surprise, Newfoundland ostentatiously refused to carry out the bargain made on her behalf, and some of those who made it did not seem to care to keep it, and aided her in further complicating matters which were difficult enough already. Jo'n gave them time, but he did not waver in his fixed resolve to let his foolish daughter see that, as long as she remained a member of the family, she must abide by its regulations ; and that, if she expected him to grant her absolute freedom, and to take upon himself the whole responsibility, she was mightily mistaken. She paid practically nothing towards the cost of his army and navy ; his enormous debt had been in part incurred for her security ; and it was rather too much to want him to go to war with Johnny for a cause in which her rights were not by any means established, and to indulge

in a struggle to the death for a daughter who treated all his wishes with disdain.

But from the other side of the world came happier tidings. The various states of Australasia, dissatisfied with the semi-union which had existed since the creation of the Federal Council, had met in solemn conclave and agreed to join in forming one great Commonwealth. The unanimity which they displayed surprised the most sanguine of their admirers, and everything seemed to promise that the great step which had been taken so successfully by Canada would be imitated by her southern sister with equally desirable results.

But John regarded their proceedings with some misgiving. They did not seem to recognize him very much in the matter, he thought. They did not appear to desire to have the benefit of appealing to his high courts of law ; they decided to appoint their own governors ; the name they had chosen for their united state smacked strongly, John considered, of republicanism ; and, although they professed effusive loyalty to their Sovereign, they evidently thought that they were quite able to take care of themselves. They were unnecessarily anxious to quit the paternal

leading-strings, and apparently prepared to disclaim the old gentleman altogether when they had got all they could out of him. And the union which John regarded with unmingled satisfaction as a prelude to a grander union still, he could not choose but see, might also be the stepping-stone to that disruption the possibility of which he had begun to regard with nothing less than dismay. But, even here, there was an unexpected hitch. The leader of the movement was defeated at the polls; the solitary realm in Oceana which had followed John's example and espoused free trade turned round, at last, and joined the rest in putting on the iron jacket of protection, which rather made him take his arm away; and the states which had sworn eternal sisterhood seemed quite content to let it rest with swearing, whilst ¹ one of them displayed a wish to cut herself in pieces, and asked him to approve the deed.

In India, moreover, there arose a cry for greater powers of self-control. Some of her children began to whisper in her ear that it was a piece of impudence for John to govern her, and, of course, a number of busybodies, who bubbled

1 Queensland.

over with a sham philanthropy, and had, for some time past, been telling her that she was just as wise as anybody else, had heartily abetted them in their demands. And some of those demands were conceded, perhaps rightly. But there were not wanting those who saw in these concessions "the beginning of the end."

And John was very much upset. Here was Paddy half prepared to leave him, Canada wondering whether she would not "have to make other arrangements," Newfoundland crying like a spoilt child, and Australia assuming an independent swagger which was, to say the least of it, a little unbecoming. Meantime, Africa showed a disposition to burn the old man in effigy every time he ventured to deny her the particular piece of candy she was asking for ; and, in the dusky bosom of his foster-daughter, India, there were slumbering passions which a syllable might rouse ; whilst Holy Russia—that "divine figure from the north"—was occupied in creeping stealthily nearer, and whispering treason in her ear continually. And one of John's poets—one of the best and wisest of

them—told him, quite solemnly, that he was a
“weary Titan,”

“Staggering on to” his “goal ;
Bearing on shoulders immense,
Atlantëan, the load,
Well-nigh not to be borne,
Of the too vast orb of” his “fate.”

“A ‘weary Titan,’ am I ?” said John. “They shall see !” And he bravely staggered on, and, as he staggered, a dim vision of the glory of the goal was suddenly vouchsafed to him ; and he squared his shoulders, and bent his back to the burden, and vowed that he would not

“bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onward ;”

and that he, who had built this world-wide Empire, would take care to see the matter through.

CHAPTER III.

THE DAWN OF AN IDEA.

John Bull pondered long and deeply. He had any number of advisers, and they nearly all advised him differently.

As to Pat's affairs, they waxed quiet fierce in their differences. They were, however, divided into two main classes. First there were the Home Rulers, embracing everybody from the Earl of Rosebery to the "Uncrowned King." Upon one point they were all agreed, and that was that the only plan which had ever been produced was quiet impracticable. It is true that the bulk of Pat's representatives had, originally professed to regard it with favour, and had made the welkin ring with their praises of the "Grand Old Man." But the other of the two great divisions—the Unionists—had all along declared that these professions were not to be relied upon; and one or two of the less discreet of Pat's

advisers had accidentally let it out that they regarded the Bill which had been offered as merely an instalment. And, when the "Uncrowned King's" intrigue with Kitty O'Shea was discovered, the insincerity of their previous declarations was made as clear as noonday.

It transpired that, at the very time that they had given John to understand that the Bill was to be taken as a final settlement of old scores, they had, behind his back, with one accord united in deciding to accept it "*pro tanto*" only ; and both sections of the solid party which events had split in pieces had begun to stipulate for conditions, as the basis of any future scheme, which the "Grand Old Man" had resolutely, *up to now*, declined to grant. And as for the "Uncrowned King"—*uncrowned* in two senses, alas ! by this—he commenced to ask for a measure which was scarcely distinguishable from downright separation. He had announced, some years before, that he would never be content until he had "destroyed the last link which" kept Pat "bound to" John ; and, although he had denied the words at the time, everybody began to realize how true they were, and that the

“Uncrowned King,” like most of his followers, was not to be trusted.

As to the “G. O. M.,” he admitted that his Bill was “dead,” but he did not seem to have any other Bill to offer in its place ; and his supporters were quite content to be like infants

“crying in the night,

* * *

And with no language but a *cry*.”

And a very foolish cry it was—so foolish that, as the day of reckoning approached, they decided to supplement it by a “Variety Programme,” and to promise everything that anybody liked to ask for.

But one of them was not so docile as the rest. His name was Mr. *Asquith*, and the name was somewhat significant of the character. The former scheme had been described by a clever young person known as “Grandolph” as the product of “the united genius of Bedlam and Colney Hatch”—what was the next to be like ? he enquired. But nobody could tell him. And John Bull was requested to “open” his “mouth and shut” his “eyes, and see what the king” would “send” him.

The Unionists, as well as the Home Rulers, were considerably divided in opinion, and, at first, had been considerably more so. They embraced everybody from "Joe" Chamberlain, as he was popularly called, to Colonel Saunderson. There was not any very material difference between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Asquith or the Earl of Rosebery ; and, if Pat had kept his temper and exercised a little common sense, it is more than likely that he would soon have got a measure of Home Rule which would have satisfied all that was reasonable in his demands without endangering the safety of the rest of the family, or the liberties of any portion of the Irish people. But there was another element in the Unionist camp. As Parnell was to Rosebery, so was Saunderson to Chamberlain. The "Uncrowned King" insisted upon practical independence—Colonel Saunderson resented the slightest alteration of the *status quo*. And, in the meantime, they all quarrelled among themselves.

And, in "United Ireland," everything was hopelessly divided. To begin with, out of a population of barely five millions, ¹ two declared

¹ See Mr. Gladstone's speech at Spital, on the 29th November, 1891, and his article entitled "A Vindication of Home Rule" in the North American Review for October, 1892.

that they would not submit, on any terms, to such a scheme as the rest demanded ; and so much in earnest were the men of Ulster they that ultimately held a great Convention, at which twelve thousand delegates attended, and resolved, without a single dissentient voice, that, if a Parliament on College Green should be established, they would refuse to take any part in the election of its members, would decline to pay its taxes, and would offer to all its decrees a passive resistance, to be followed, it was understood, if needful, by the fierce arbitrament of arms. So that the men who, it was said, were going to pacify Ireland, proposed to commence the process by waking a hundred dormant animosities, and arraying two millions of the population—and those the very cream of them—in deadly opposition to the dictates of the new assembly, and in armed antagonism to its laws. They called this patriotic fever “ Ulsteria,” but it appeared to have infected the best part of a province ; and a similar Convention met in Dublin to prove that there were many thousands in the South and West who were suffering from the same complaint. And none but fools were blind to it, and none but quacks proposed to cure it by the antiquated process known as bleeding.

The other three millions were divided into any number of hostile sections. There were, to begin with, the Parnellites and the Anti-Parnellites, who hated each other like poison, and whose chief amusement seemed to be to break each others heads.

But the Anti-Parnellites were sub-divided into half a dozen factions who were scarcely less opposed to each other than they were to the Parnellites. There were the McCarthyites—the followers of the “ nice old gentleman for a tea-party ;” the Healyites—led by the chief of “ the gutter sparrows ;” the Dillonites—who believed in the lugubrious John ; the O’Brienites—who worshipped the Hero of the Breeches ; and the “ Walshers”—who denounced from the altar the men who dared to vote against their nominee. And, whilst new schisms were arising almost every day in one or other of the various wings of this heterogeneous army, the two million Loyalists, impelled by the common danger, drew closer together, and the rabid Orangeman was aided heart and soul by the most moderate and respectable and law-abiding men in the island.

It seemed to nearly all the wisest of John's counsellors—without distinction of party—that, in face of all these facts, it would be nothing short of madness to relinquish the imperial control ; and, whatever might be ultimately possible in the shape of a development of local self-government, for the present, what was wanted was “ the reign of law,” assisted by the operation of philanthropy, and rendered easy by beneficent reform.

But, in regard to Oceana, a score of oracles were ready with their rival schemes. Some asserted, point blank, even yet, that John would be better without any Empire at all ; and a foolish person known as “ Labby,” who was principally famous for his antediluvian witticisms and the pertinacity with which he pried into other people's business, had declared that he wished from the bottom of his heart that Newfoundland would “ cut the painter,” as then perhaps some of the rest of the family might follow suit. Even of those who admitted that the colonies were valuable, not a few believed that it was quite impossible to permanently weld them into one. In the meantime, all they had to suggest was that John should cultivate an interchange of courtesies ; that he

should send his princes to the ports of Oceana with soft words and flattering speeches, and decorate her citizens with titles and with stars of honour, and encourage them to enter the imperial army or navy, or the diplomatic service, and permit her barristers to practice in the imperial courts of law, and her judges to be eligible for seats upon the English bench. They added that it would be wise for him to send as governors his ablest men ; that in every way that was possible he should be guided by the wishes of his children, and should, whenever asked, at once relax still more the slender bonds which kept his numerous family together. It was the principle of postponing the inevitable by a policy of " soft sawder," and savoured somewhat overmuch, John thought, of begging his children not to forsake their poor old father in the time of his gray hairs.

He was fully prepared to do everything he reasonably could to foster filial affection, and declared his willingness to consider all or any of these suggestions ; but he was not slow to recognize that, if his family were only to be kept together by sops and sentimentalities, they would not keep together very long. A policy of porridge was only fit for national babyhood.

As his children reached maturity, they would naturally wish to leave the nursery ; they would ask to learn the business, to have a stake in it, and, perhaps, to be admitted into partnership.

But such of them as seemed disposed to contemplate a partnership at all were only willing to do so upon the lines of limited liability. They were not averse from calling the tune, but they objected to paying the piper. As long as John would do exactly what they told him and defray the whole cost out of his own pocket they voted him a very worthy old gentleman. Whenever he ventured to assert his paternal authority they began to growl ; and, if he dared to hint that he should expect them to contribute to the expenses of the establishment in the profits of which they were all soready to share, they commenced to talk very largely of starting in business for themselves.

This was ungrateful, to say the least of it. To found the Empire which his sons inhabited John had incurred a debt of something like eight hundred million pounds, and, as security for this, he had originally had a mortgage on the whole estate ; but, partly under the advice of Cobden and other gentlemen as glib of speech as they were short of foresight, and partly under an

impulse of good nature which was equally unusual and unbusiness-like, he had handed over to a mere handful of his descendants the bulk of his security, freed from any liability for the debt, and had taken the entire burden upon his own shoulders. Moreover, in the breadth of his unwise benevolence, he had given to them the right to shut their markets in his face, and even, if they chose, to refuse admission to his toilworn emigrants, though millions of square miles were still unoccupied and he was almost crowded out at home. Nor was this all. For their security as much as for his own, he launched a mighty fleet equipped with all the deadly requisites of war, and towards its maintenance he paid per year about a pound to every sixpence paid by all of them combined, and this although, out of an annual total trade throughout the whole of Oceana of seven hundred and forty-four millions of pounds, considerably more than half was a trade in which the colonies were interested just as much as he, and considerably more than a quarter a trade in which he had no personal interest at all. Furthermore, his army was at their free disposal in any time of need, and it was from his capacious pocket that the cost of keeping up, in every country on the globe, a diplomatic service came

—a service under which—¹ as one of his advisers had reminded him—every son of Oceana got “the full advantage of being a citizen of one of the oldest, richest, and most powerful Empires in the world without, directly or indirectly, paying one penny-piece for the privilege.”

And yet his children snapped and snarled at him, and, if he ventured to assert the least authority, began to bluster like a parcel of rebellious school-boys, and to declare that they would not submit to his impudence any longer. He sometimes wondered what they would have thought if he had taken them at their word, and said, as one of the watery wits who swore by Mr. Bright until he proved himself worth swearing by—the great “Sir Wilfrid”—had said of Erin: “Wayward sister, go in peace!” He felt that his offspring had not adequately realized what leaving him would mean. It would mean, of course, as much increase of dignity as was implied in the right to manage their own affairs. But it would mean the abandonment of the privileges of a world-wide citizenship. It would mean the cost of the establishment of separate navies which, palpably,

¹ For fuller details in regard to these matters see the able article by Sir John Colomb, K.C.M.G., M.P. in “*Britannic Federation*.”

could not protect their commerce like the fleet whose vessels cruised beneath the "meteor flag" on every sea, and were backed by the whole force of the Empire. It would mean the drying up of "the golden stream" of British credit. And it would mean the probable restriction of the trade between the various members of the family, and the certain expenditure upon the consular service which every branch of it would individually need. And, last of all, it would mean the loss of *prestige* which must inevitably follow the process of disintegration, and the possibility of quarrel with a dozen rival nations once allied.

But John was well aware that all the advantages were not upon one side. If his children saved millions of money every year, and gained in credit, in wealth, and in security by a union to the maintenance of which they scarcely paid a cent, he was able to draw from them his food supply and the raw material necessary for his industries, and need not starve though all the other nations closed their doors to him. And they furnished him, in every quarter of the globe, with ports to which his fleet might sail for victuals and for armaments, and thus protect, in time of war, the ships upon whose safe arrival he depended for his daily meal.

The fact was that enormous advantages accrued to all parties from the connection, and the more clear-headed of John's children had begun to see it plainly enough. It was only the "Labbys" and the Lawsons here, at home, who dreamed of doubting it by this, and nobody cared very much for the opinions of gentlemen "of that ilk." And pretty much the same applied throughout the Empire. The ablest brains in Oceana were alive to their unparalleled good fortune, and saw that, great as were the benefits arising from the present system, under an amended system, benefits immeasurably greater would arise. Their trade might be conducted on more equitable terms and undergo unlimited expansion. The crowded populations of the mother country might find accommodation in new lands, beneath the same old flag, and send their English brethren food and raw material, and buy from them their countless manufactures in return. Her armies welded into one, her fleets increased and rendered homogeneous, and her defences worked in concert from a common centre, Oceana might become invulnerable—able to laugh at the very suggestion of attack, and to form a League of Peace which might enforce its will throughout the world.

And, after all, blood was thicker than water, and, in spite of the grumbling of John's children, they were really very fond of him. And, although they kept their purse-strings pretty tight, and were quite willing to accept advantages for which they did not pay, their selfishness was mainly on the surface. If their ears were tickled by the jingle of their guineas, their hearts were swayed by nobler impulses ; and, now and then, the spirit of their father ran like fire through their veins, and everybody felt that, if danger threatened him, John had not far to look for friends. And, when he had to face a savage horde in the Soudan, and was on the very verge of a bloody war with Russia, it had brought tears into his eyes to find how ready they were to assist him—how Australia had equipped an army and despatched it with unanimous enthusiasm ; how Canada had offered to do the same at a moment's notice ; how in Africa a kindred impulse had arisen ; and how even India had given her gold and gems, and mustered swarthy armies to defend the sunny realm which John had ruled so wisely, and for which he had shown himself prepared to make so many sacrifices.

And once, at his request, their statesmen gathered in his old metropolis to talk the matter over with his own, and voted funds to help him to maintain the fleets and fortresses which were of such enormous service to them both. And, although there had been some differences of opinion at this great Council of his children, and although the sum was small, it was offered in a frank and friendly spirit, and was a step, at any rate, in the right direction. And this gathering—one of the wisest of the many wise achievements of the patriotic statesman on whose shoulders “Dizzy’s” mantle seemed to have fallen—had suggested infinite possibilities to John.

And, as a permanent memorial of the fiftieth anniversary of the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne of all these rising realms, the jovial and sagacious prince who had visited and knew them all had suggested that the “Kith and Kineries” should be succeeded by a palace reared in perpetuity to house the industries of Oceana, and exhibit in her capital a continuous object-lesson to the sons and daughters of the island, and to the pilgrim children whom the love of home drew oft-times thitherward. And the children

took the project up with more enthusiasm than the father, and each contributed a share, and, in due season, there arose an institution which, in all that mighty city, every inch of which was sacred to the man with eyes to see, was not surpassed for interest and significance.

And some could see in it "the unit of imperial federation," and imagined that, beneath its roof, the representatives of Oceana might meet in frequent council, and unite to gradually knit the scattered empire into one stupendous whole.

There were many other schemes proposed, however, as means of uniting John and his family more closely. Some were in favour of establishing a separate Council of Advice, upon the principle of the Indian Council. Some suggested that Colonial Peers should sit in the House of Lords, and the Marquess of *Cum-grano-Salisbury* had, with his usual sagacity, introduced a scheme embodying this idea, though, unluckily, it never got beyond the preliminary stages. Some, again, desired that the Agents-General of the various colonies, or other persons duly chosen for the post, should sit upon the Privy Council, and some that they should sit within the Cabinet itself.

Many went, at once, for larger schemes—for annual conferences such as that to which allusion has been made, and even for the creation of a new assembly—a sort of Imperial Council or Parliament, intended specially to manage all imperial affairs.

However, most of these schemes were flouted by nearly all responsible statesmen, and their advocates were usually held up as visionaries by nearly all practical men. But the practical men have been the mistaken men in all ages, and the dreamers are the men who lead the way. And one thing, at all events, seemed pretty certain. There was, in every part of Greater Britain, as there was at home, a growing feeling in favour of unity; and, a few years earlier, a statesman whose name deserves to be held in eternal honour by all patriotic citizens—the famous “Buckshot” Forster, who, by the way, like “Bloody” Balfour, was one of the best friends that Pat, who christened him, had ever had—assisted by a few far-sighted men of both parties, and aided by the more sagacious statesmen in the younger lands beyond the sea, had met to declare that some form of Imperial Federation was necessary in order to permanently maintain the

unity of the Empire, and, of course, to form the customary League.

But, in the meantime, John had other problems to disquiet him. If there were one thing that he loved more than another, it was the church of his fathers. And he began to fear that her days were numbered. Distracted by internal differences, and badgered by a score of jealous sects, she seemed, in spite of her renewed activity, to be tottering slowly to her fall. And the land was torn with fierce religious jealousies, and, disgusted by the shameful spectacle of those whose creed was love indulging in such bitter hatreds, and fettering the minds of men in shackles of such mediæval shape, the thoughtful portion of John's children were seeking "new lamps for old," and turning from the tumult of the churches to the great silences of Nature. And some of them, in their despair, had banished God from it, and looked out upon the star-lit universe with eyes all dimmed with tears.

And then there was the ever-present problem of the poor. Under the firm and peaceful guidance of a Ministry who knew their own mind, and carried out a fair, and bold, and

systematic policy, John's trade, depressed for years, had grown "by leaps and bounds." And in all his factories the hum of vast machinery was heard; his furnaces were red both night and day; and over every sea his vessels flew with bales of costly merchandise. And the poor were growing richer, and a brighter prospect seemed to open out for every class and interest in John's busy little island.

But the minds of the toilers were in a ferment. Enfranchised ere their education was complete, they felt their power before they were properly competent to use it. They were the prey to reckless demagogues, and frequently put forth demands which it was quite impossible to grant. And, if their wishes were refused, they generally said good morning, and got drunk upon the subject. And, if others had the hardihood to step into their shoes, they did their utmost to intimidate them; and the boycotting which had been the bane of Pat began to blight the growing hopes of John. Capital and Labour, instead of working amicably together, were in a state of chronic antagonism. Strikes were of frequent occurrence. One day a great city had to go without its gas. Next, a score of mighty steamers were allowed to

lie in dock with nobody to unload them. The trains were stopped at a moment's notice on a busy line, and clerks and porters had to man the engines and unload the trucks. On another occasion, the London omnibuses ceased to run, and its five millions of citizens were suddenly left to their legs again. And, now and then, the colliers would put on their coats, the forges and the factories would be deprived of coal, and thousands of poor people who had not any interest in the quarrel were doomed to shiver wretchedly by empty grates. And all of them seemed blind to the fact that, if they persevered in these experiments, the trade of England would infallibly be driven away to other realms, and Capital refuse its aid where Labour asked its own conditions, and absolutely wished to "rule the roost."

But, unreasonable as many of his workers were, John could not blame them overmuch. For centuries their lot had been the lot of slaves, and, even now, one-tenth of them, it was said, were on the brink of beggary. "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London" was ringing in John's ears ; he had been taken, with an aching heart, through "Darkest England ;" and the old man was not surprised to find that those who

dwelt in it should seek by every means, legitimate or otherwise, to find their "way out." And, though, doubtless, this was "the best of all possible worlds," and his own little island the best of all possible countries, it did seem strange to him, sometimes, that, whilst his income grew, and his resources multiplied, and he had millions of acres oversea which were capable of producing enough to keep a population many times as large as his own in comfort, aye, and luxury, one tenth of them were practically starving ; that the great majority lived in homes that were little better than hovels, and ate, and drank, and played football, and brought large families into the world, and then were put into their coffins, and were often glad to get there ; that not a dozen in a hundred knew what wholesome food, and pleasant dress, and elegant surroundings meant ; and that even these, in their sober moments, were fain to admit that they thrived by trickery, and flourished by a flagrant disregard of everything but self.

"What is the use of all my broad dominions if they will not keep my family in comfort?" said John. "I may make peace with Pat, and Canada, and Australia, and all my other children

may join the firm—nay, my very churches may grow sane again, and work in harmony; but I shall never be satisfied as long as any son of mine is doomed to pass his prime in the slums, and to end his days in the workhouse.”

And he pondered long and earnestly. Here were four problems, at least, which intimately affected himself, and any one of which seemed hard enough to solve. And, beyond them, was a world which trembled ever on the verge of war, and groaned beneath intolerable burdens, and some part of which was always dreaming how it best might cheat some other part, though God had “made of one blood all” the “nations,” and had meant them to be brothers, and to “dwell together in unity.”

It was a pitiable spectacle. And half the remedies his counsellors suggested only seemed to make the matter worse. He wished with all his heart to be just to Pat, but he could not see the force of allowing him to play with powder, and imperil both his own existence and the safety of the common household. He would have gladly given him a Parliament if only he could have seen his way to do so without involving him in greater difficulties than ever, and hopelessly

endangering the peace of Taffy, and Sandy, and himself.

He longed to make his children partners in the business, but he felt that this was out of the question unless they were willing to share in the losses as well as the profits, and to cease to fill their pockets by closing their doors to his goods.

He was sick of the quarrels of the churches, and prayed that they might be composed; for he could not bring himself to think that all these bickerings were necessary outcomes of the "New Commandment;" or that the followers of Christ were well employed in burning each other (either here or hereafter), whilst "the poor" were "always with" them, and the beings who were made "a little lower than the angels" reeled "back into the beast."

And he yearned to see his humblest children prosperous, and the good things of life more equally divided, and the gulf which yawned between the "classes and the masses" bridged; but he failed to see how any could thrive if his mines and mills were closed, and all his vessels idle; or how the injustice to Hornyhand would justify an

injustice to Midas. He wanted all to be happy, but it puzzled him to know how everybody could be equal. He sought to elevate the low, but he did not desire to debase the exalted.

And it ill became him to attempt to put the world in order with his family in such a state.

Were there not any means by which these various ends might all be compassed? Was it not possible to harmonize Home Rule and Unionism, "Empire and Liberty," religious harmony and individual freedom, Socialism and "Take Care of Number One?" And might he not, in looking to his own necessities, be indirectly helping others too?

"That man's the best Cosmopolite
Who loves his native country best,"

said John, as he thought the matter over. And gradually there dawned upon his troubled consciousness a new idea. He slapped his thigh with the greatest vigour, and got up from his seat beside the fire, and, in a fit of genuine excitement, went out into the open fields. And, all at once, the sky grew strangely blue to him. And the tramps that passed him on the road turned

suddenly to stalwart yeomen, comfortably clad, and 'blithe as larks or linnets. And someone happened to remark that it would be a good thing if his other island could be swallowed by an earthquake. And John promptly told him that he was talking nonsense. And then he met a man who said that the Church was in a bad way and the State no better ; that Newfoundland was going to leave him ; and that things were looking very black in Canada, and that Australia was getting mightily independent, and that " Holy Russia " was only biding her time to pounce on India, and that we were on the eve of a frightful European war. And John blurted out that the man was an idiot. And that night he went to bed happy.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FEDERATION OF THE KINGDOM.

First of all, John turned his attention to unlucky Fat. Things were looking brighter in the green island. Whilst the "*Uncrowned King*" was battling with "the gutter sparrows," "Bloody" Balfour was steadily proceeding with his work ; and, in the angry hours in which his "minions" were engaged in keeping the "patriots" from each other's throats, his sister was distributing, with wise discrimination, help to every one who needed it. The coffers of the League were exhausted, and its dupes were left to starve ; but John Bull put his hand in his pocket and kept the wolf from the door, and "Bloody" Balfour was his almoner.

And work was plentiful, and trade improved, and through the wildest wastes in all the land were heard the whistle of the railway train, the

click of picks, and all the sounds of honest toil. The mountain solitudes were linked to mighty cities, and the pulse of Commerce once again began to throb by lonely inlets and romantic rivers, and underneath the shadow of deserted hills. In the congested districts, thanks to the development of the fisheries, the consolidation of the smaller holdings, the improvements in the breeds of the live stock, the encouragement of local industries, the opening out of the quarries and the mines, and the further generous improvements in the laws on land, the people wore a more contented air, and in every county in the Emerald Isle the tenants were buying their farms and settling happily upon the soil. Whilst the few were fighting—flinging lime, or hurling paving-stones, or brandishing shillelaghs—the multitude were growing quite indifferent to all their vulgar outcry, and were often enough disposed to exclaim :

“ A plague on both your houses ! ”

Indeed, by the time the Elections came, a large number who had formerly been resolutely hostile to the Union and its advocates decided to vote for the friends of “ Bloody ” Balfour rather than for the so-called followers of the “ nice old

gentleman for a tea-party," or for bould "Jack" Redmond and the party who had stood, in his disaster, by the "*Uncrowned King*." And, had it not been for Taffy and Sandy, who had got Mr. Gladstone on the brain, and the newly-enfranchised rustics, who knew more about bacon than politics, the Unionists would, no doubt, have been returned by an immense majority.¹

John felt like kicking both Taffy and Sandy, and he cursed his own fatuity in having given Hodge a vote before teaching him his alphabet. But here was that dreadful "G.O.M." in power again with a small majority. And, of course, he had to introduce another Home Rule Bill, and, in spite of the six years which had been given him to think the matter over, it was not any better than the first. As every one who had made a study of his character had prophesied, the concessions which he made were nearly all concessions to John's enemies. Whilst mild young Mr. Maden had been winning an election by a policy of "Gas and Water"; and whilst Sir Charles Russell had been insisting on the right of veto, and the power of the Imperial Parliament to override the Parliament on College Green; and whilst

1 This paragraph was written *before* the Elections.

Sir George Otto Trevelyan, after several years of squirming, was declaring that the authority of the Imperial Parliament must be "not only nominal and theoretical, but also real, practical, and genuine, controlling every other body and authority whatsoever," with the same effusive unreliability as he had shown in declaring that not until his "every faculty" had been "strained to the uttermost" would he consent to the "confession that the Liberal Party was a Home Rule party"; and whilst Sir William Vernon Harcourt had been "cultivating his own fireside," and bitterly denouncing "Fenian Home Rule," and proclaiming that "the principle for which the Liberal Party had contended had been the right of the Irish people to manage their own affairs, subject, *always subject*, to the control of the Imperial Parliament," the men who could see through an open door continued to declare that this was so much nonsense; and that, if any of the men who preached it honestly believed it, they were nothing more nor less than "blind leaders of the blind," and that probably both would "fall into the ditch." They remembered how "the stripling," Mr. Harrison, had said that of all statesmen who had ever lived the

"G.O.M." was the one who was "most squeezable upon an emergency." They remembered how he had yielded, step by step, to all Pat's previous demands. They remembered how the Clerkenwell Explosion had frightened him into disestablishing the Irish Church; how the reign of the Moonlighter had been followed by the passing of the second Land Act; and how the fact that there were eighty-six Obstructionists elected to oppose him in the House of Commons had suddenly converted him to Home Rule. They knew how he had cringed before the warriors of the Mahdi, and retired before the soldiers of the Czar. Majuba Hill was burnt upon their memories, and the sequel to the ignominious peace that followed it was a standing illustration of the risk of putting any trust in Mr. Gladstone's word. Defeated three times by the Boers, he gave them back their freedom, but professed that we retained our power; that the Loyalists who had spent their money in the country on the faith of England's word, and the native tribes who trusted us, and begged us not to hand them over to their ancient foes, might make their minds quite easy, for the Queen was still the *suzerain* of that far

realm, and he had taken ample guarantees for their protection, and for the maintenance of the imperial sway. But sensible people shook their heads, and said, with "Punch," that *suzerain* was "bad change for a sovereign."

And so indeed it proved. In a few months, all his elaborate stipulations had been set aside, and even the shadowy semblance of a prerogative which had merely been retained to tickle the ears of the electors was suddenly dropped like a hot potato, for "the Boers had good rifles, and knew how to use them," and the niggers were naked, and had to be content with prayers. And could he be trusted (in face of opposition) to insist upon the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, and the protection of the rights of the Loyalists of Ireland, any more than he had insisted upon the suzerainty of the sovereign, and the protection of the rights of the Loyalists of the Transvaal? He told them that it was a monstrous calumny to say that Pat desired his independence, and he waxed exceedingly indignant when the standard bearers of the Union Jack declared that he and those who followed him were Separatists; but every one who understood the temper of the Irish

leaders know that practical separation was their object, and every one who knew the Scotch, and Welsh, and ¹ *so-called* English who composed his motley crew were quite aware that they would get it, if unhappily his Bill became an Act, though it would doubtless be specially labelled, like a sort of political oleomargarine. For these Irish "patriots," who cooed like turtle doves on British platforms, brandished their shillelaghs and cried out for Parliaments "as free as air" at home. And their motto was "Ireland a nation," and their programme was to hoist "the green above the red," and on it to display "a harp without a crown." And they were masters of the situation. Seven years before, the "G.O.M." had said that, if the Liberal party were returned "in a minority which might become a majority by the aid of the Irish vote," and "called upon to deal with this great constitutional question of the government of Ireland," in spite of the many admirable qualities of the said Liberal party, "in such a position as that, it would not be safe for it to enter upon the consideration of the principles of a measure with respect to which, at every step of its progress, it

1 "Are you a Home Ruler?" Some one once inquired of Lord Tennyson. "No," said the great poet; "I am an Englishman."

would be in the power of a party coming from Ireland to say 'Unless you do this, and unless you do that, we turn you out to-morrow!' " And such was the position now. "Unless" he did "this and unless" he did "that," he was liable to be kicked from office at a moment's notice. And, of course, he did it.

Had he had the manliness to tell them to their face that, sink or swim, he should not make any further surrender to their insolent requests; had he had the pluck to say, at any point in all his long descent, "Thus far and no farther," he might have won the admiration of his bitterest enemies, and he and they, uniting, might have passed a measure such as Ireland really needed—not designed to satisfy a wild demand, but simply to secure that justice should be done to all, and nothing more nor less, although the country seethed with simulated passion, and her swarm of noisy "patriots" did their worst.

But this was not the old man's way. And John Bull saw with horror that the new measure gave Pat power to work his will across the Channel, and still left him master here; that it handed Ulster over, with her well-earned

gold, to pay the piper while he smoked his pipe, and drank his whisky, and danced to the old rebellious tune ; that the promised safeguards were so many mockeries ; that the bulk of the old restrictions were withdrawn ; that the simple meaning of the matter was that a country within a score of miles of Britain was to be made as independent as a colony ten thousand miles away ; and that the only material difference consisted in the fact that the two main things she wanted—the power to establish a church and control the education of the young, and the power to shut our exports out by heavy duties, were withheld, apparently in order to afford a footing for another agitation, and an opportunity for the “mimbers” who remained at Westminster to tantalize us till we turned them out of doors, and wiped our hands of the “distressful country” altogether.

Men had looked to the Madens, the Russells, and the Harcourts to protest against “the government of Ireland according to Irish ideas” and to remind them of their vow to have nothing to do with “Fenian Home Rule” ; but Mr. Maden, and “Sir Charles,” and, of course, Sir George Otto Trevelyan, and all the minor crowd of Braggadochios trooped

valiantly into the lobby with turned coats again. As for "Sir William," he was so busily occupied in tomahawking everyone who had the slightest vestige of principle left that he appeared to have quite forgotten that he had once declared that "Irish ideas" were entirely opposed to "Imperial ideas;" and that, "if they were to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas, he feared that they would find themselves reduced to the consequence of not governing Ireland at all." It is astonishing what short memories some politicians have.

The Redmondites, although they swore a good deal, of course accepted this five-sixths of the loaf "*pro tanto*"; the Healyites, the Dillonites, the O'Brienites, the "Walshers," and last—and least—the McCarthyites, calmly put their tongues in their cheeks, winked at each other, and did the same. Taffy (yearning to despoil a church) was quite prepared to vote the scheme a masterpiece; and Sandy (pondering over the pious sentiments with which "Auld Willie" had concluded his great speech upon the introduction of the Bill) shook his head rather gravely, and—imitated Taffy. Here and there an Englishman was found with manliness enough to refuse to be juggled by

a peroration into bartering a birthright, and with sturdy sense enough to say that, if this were what was meant by giving Pat "the right to make his own canals and railways"—for thus Home Rule had often been defined—he might keep to his jaunting cars. But the bulk of them had been so well schooled by Mr. Schnadhorst, had so many selfish ends to serve, and, withal, believed so superstitiously in "the Fetish" (who dwelt at Hawarden) "to the fools" (who dwelt in all localities) that they answered to the crack of the *Whip* with the obedience of a regiment of soldiers. ¹And, when the tellers reappeared, it was evident that, in spite of all prognostications to the contrary, the "G.O.M." had won.

And then there came a solemn moment for the Gilded Chamber. For weeks the air had

1 Some of my readers may think that I have taken a too gloomy view of the probabilities of the situation. I have done so intentionally, in order to show that, even if matters come to the worst, there is not any occasion for despair. I am not without hope that, in spite of present appearances, there may still be found in the House of Commons sufficient independent members of the Liberal party to throw out (as in 1886) any Bill which is calculated to endanger the unity of the Empire, or the safety of any section of the people of Ireland, and so to relieve the House of Lords from the odium which, in these enlightened days, so frequently attaches to the performance of the most palpable public duty.

been thick with threats against that venerable institution, and, though everybody knew that, if ever there were a time in its history in which it was its absolute duty to insist upon an appeal to the people, that time had come, the party hacks denounced it by anticipation as the foe of liberty, and vowed, in every dialect of Billingsgate, that, if it dared to be anything better than an echo to the brazen voice of Demos, it was doomed, and nothing could save it. But, in spite of all the uproar, it did exactly what those who knew the nature of an English gentleman believed it would do. It did its duty. With calm indifference to the rabble bellowing about its doors, and heedless of the dreadful fate in store, it rejected, well-nigh by its unanimous vote, this bastard Bill which was born of the ill-assorted union of English renegades and Irish traitors, and declared, in tones of more than all the ancient majesty, that, whether it were "mended or ended,"

"As long as" it remained, it "must speak free";

and that never would the Second Chamber pass a Bill of such a character until the people knew its meaning, and expressed their willingness to ratify it clause by clause.

The Separatists were beside themselves with

rage, and defiantly refused to dissolve. They brought in various other measures—some wise, some foolish—and the wise ones (provided that they had been sufficiently before the country) the peers at once approved, and the foolish ones (in spite of much abuse) they promptly vetoed. And then the Government determined to play their trump card—to rob property of its sole remaining franchise, and afterwards appeal to the country with the cry of “Home Rule for Ireland, and down with the House of Lords.”

But, somehow, the Lords were not in the least bit frightened. And, when a measure which was known as the One Man One Vote Bill came up for their consideration, they quietly pursued the very same course as that which they had followed with such good results in the case of the County Franchise Bill, and said that they were perfectly willing to assent to it provided that it were coupled with an honest Redistribution Bill, and that *one vote* meant *one value*. Now, at the present time, Pat had twenty members more than he was properly entitled to, and, of his total representatives, the thriving towns of Ulster did not get their due proportion, whilst the rebel centres in the South and West got more than theirs.

One Kerry voter was almost as powerful as two Antrim voters, and two voters in Derry had less influence than one in Longford; whilst one vote in Kilkenny was equal to fully a score in Belfast. Had London been treated with the same regard as Galway, she would have had over two hundred representatives instead of sixty-two. And these discrepancies were not confined to Ireland. Taffy, with his Radical proclivities, had three members too many, and John, so staunch in his Conservatism, had twenty-three too few. To take another illustration, one vote in Radical Durham was worth as much as six in Conservative North-West Manchester. Sandy got his share, and nothing more nor less; but even these were not distributed fairly as between the Highland crofters and the Glasgow artisans. In every portion of the Kingdom similar anomalies prevailed, and, by the most elementary principles of fair play, it was evident that these anomalies ought to be removed. But the Parnellites and all the other "ites" who claimed to be Pat's representatives knew that it meant the loss of over twenty votes to them; and Taffy knew that it meant the loss of some to him; and the "G.O.M." was well aware that what he might gain by sweeping wealth and education from the

register he would lose by treating every man the same. And, although the principle for which the peers contended was absolutely just, the Separatists would not swallow it. Their so-called zeal for parliamentary reform was but a dodge for jerrymandering the Constitution, and past experience had taught them to believe in the infinite gullibility of "that great ass, the public"; and so they added to the charge that the House of Lords had declined to split the Kingdom without giving the people a voice in the bargain the charge that it had refused to admit that one Irishman was equal to one and a quarter Scotchmen, and one Welshman to very nearly two Londoners. Of course they had another war or two to add to the list of their achievements, and were able to tell the electors that trade was rapidly decreasing; that taxes had risen; that the Emerald Isle was drifting gradually back to anarchy; that Russia had pounced upon the Pamirs; that Johnny Crapaud was undoing all that we had done in Egypt; that already they were embarked upon a "policy of scuttle"; that Uganda had been only saved because the Earl of Rosebery—who ought to have been a Unionist, as, indeed, in all Im-

perial affairs he was—had let them plainly see that, if they decided to abandon it, he should feel it to be his duty to forthwith abandon them; and that in every quarter of the globe the enemies of England were growing bolder, and the fame of England waxing dim.

And they buttered their addresses with millenniums, and flavoured their speeches with the “fruits of” a “philosophy” which taught them that “honesty” was “the *worst* policy,” and that the true way to be happy was to “bear false witness against” their neighbours, and to “covet or desire other men’s goods.” They got their Dissenting friends who professed neutrality to push them in their periodicals, and paste electioneering placards on their chapel doors; and, when Dissenting pastors came from Ireland to plead the northern cause, they published letters telling them to stop at home, and that it was very wrong to talk politics unless they talked as Mr. Gladstone told them.

And another device, which had been first essayed at Newcastle, became extremely popular. It was to hold prayer meetings in order to assist in securing the return of the Gladstonian

candidate, especially if he happened to be a distinguished Agnostic, just as they enthusiastically supported the Temperance candidate, especially if he happened to be a brewer. Ah, me ! Surely "God must needs laugh outright, could such a thing be, to see his wondrous Manikins here below !"

But John Bull's anger had been slowly rising. He was sick and weary of such cant, and tired of seeing Oceana everlastingly in tears, and, of late, whenever the "G.O.M." got up to make a speech, he remembered the Duke of Wellington, and, with a gesture of impatience, turned contemptuously away and muttered, "Words, words, words !" If Pat persisted in making a nuisance of himself after all that John had done for him, he would teach him better manners ; and, if Taffy and Sandy declined to help him to maintain the Empire which was theirs as much as his, he would maintain it himself. It was all nonsense to rate at the Gilded Chamber for doing what he placed it there to do. He was not going to "sell Ulster into slavery," and to give to Pat, under the guise of local government, the right to snap his fingers in his face. It was absurd to bother about restricting one man

to one vote if one man's vote were sometimes worth as much as twenty. And Russia was not going to have India, nor Johnny Crapaud to thrust him out of Egypt; and, even for the pleasure of being governed by "Mr. Gladstone and Master Herbert," he was not prepared to see his commerce falling off, his expenses increasing, and his sleep continually disturbed by the nightmare of ignoble yielding or unnecessary war.

And, with a voice which now, at any rate, there was not any possibility of mistaking, he once more sent the "Grand Old Man" about his business. And Sandy, to his great delight, considerably helped him in the task, and Pat returned an added number of good fellows to represent him whose hearts were broad enough to embrace Oceana without in any way forgetting Erin, and who were as loyal to the Crown as John himself. And even Taffy, given over as he had been, of late, "to a sour and jealous political Nonconformity," began to show his better side, and manifest some glimmering of a desire to assist the old man in maintaining the dignity of the family and the safety of the estate.

The "Grand Old Man" retired, in a huff, to

Hawarden, and betook himself to his Homer. And he spent the remainder of his life in writing post cards, adding to the literature of his country, and seeking to make peace between Science and Religion. All men had all along admired the spotlessness of his domestic life and character ; all men were proud of his immense attainments and his boundless versatility ; and, now that he had ceased to interfere with politics, all men began to like him, and to admit that he really was a "Grand Old Man" after all. And, in the tranquil splendour of his closing years, they quite forgot the clouds and storms which marred the fame of his meridian ; and John Bull agreed with Sandy that he had no doubt, done his best, and had honestly meant to serve his country, even when he wounded her the most.

And, once again, John called to power the "Markiss" and his nephew, and the Cabinet who knew their own minds, and believed in justice to everybody—even to the man who had a balance at his banker's. There was not any shirking of responsibility, or any repetition of the "policy of scuttle."

" Pray God our greatness may not fail
Through craven fears of being great "

had been the cry of the singer who had put John's highest dreams to deathless music ; and, although the " G.O.M. " had done his best to impress upon John's mind the idea that, try as he would, he was unequal to the task of governing so vast an Empire, John did not falter. He was developing a soul above the counter, and every day increased his faith in his imperial destiny. Once more " the meteor flag " commanded universal honour, and the name of Englishman became the passport to the world's esteem. There was not any longer any risk of war. And trade again revived. And Oceana still expanded. And several legacies of trouble were disposed of to the general satisfaction. The Russian Bear no longer prowled amid the Himalayas, and the Gaulish cockerel no longer crowed above the pyramids of Egypt. And, in exchange for some small concession in the far Pacific, Johnny Crapaud was willing to forego his ancient rights to the Newfoundland fisheries ; and, to everyone's satisfaction, the Cabinet succeeded in crowning the settlement of the dispute by persuading Newfoundland to join the great Canadian Federation, and thus

1 See article on " England's Mission " in " Nineteenth Century " for September, 1878, and the first Mialothian Speech, 25th November, 1879,

retain her local liberty, and gain the strength which came of closer union with the grandest colony which John possessed. Another source of friction which had sorely interfered with the relations which existed between Canada and Brother Jonathan—the question of the rights of each to fish for seals in Behring's Sea—was amicably settled by the arbitration which the "Markiss" had suggested ere he handed over his portfolio, and both abided honourably by the award. The ills of Queensland had been remedied by the simple process of dividing it into two separate provinces, with separate governments, each represented in one central assembly which included all the sister states; for the Commonwealth of Australasia had, at last, become, by a judicious policy of give and take, a thing accomplished, and right glad was John to hear of it.

In domestic policy they were not less fortunate. Without having made any extravagant promises, or bribed the voters by flinging broadcast offers which they knew that they would never be able to fulfil, they quietly persisted, as aforetime, in following the path of peaceable reform.

They were especially successful in their treat-

ment of the Labour Question. What John Bull wanted was a party which would be frankly democratic without ceasing to be imperial. He had clung to the Radicals because they seemed to recognize the aspirations of the working-classes more fully than their rivals. He had preferred the Conservatives because of their superior foreign and colonial policy. But neither side was quite in harmony with his opinions. As there seemed to be more hope that the Conservatives would become Reformers than that the Radicals would become Imperialists, his sympathies had increasingly tended in the direction of the new Conservatism which was the offspring of the union of the better class of Liberals with the broader-minded Tories. For John Bull was an Imperialist to the backbone, but, somehow, more and more he felt that he was drifting into sympathy with Socialism. And he wished, if possible, to reconcile the two. The Conservatives had never faltered in their love for the Empire, and, at times, indeed, had carried it to rather foolish lengths, and led him into that Imperialism on the spree which was known as Jingoism. But, in spite of Radical professions of exclusive sympathy, and their claim

to be the patentees of every possible reform, it was a fact that the working-men of England owed the bulk of the legislation which affected their happiness at home and in the workshop to the party who were supposed to be their enemies. They did not, for a moment, attempt to compete with the Radicals in the sphere of sweeping constitutional changes—which usually left men's daily comforts pretty much in the same position as before—but they did claim, and they claimed justly, to have proved by the record, at any rate, of their more recent legislation, that they were animated by a genuine desire to promote the welfare of all classes, and, most of all, the working-classes.

In a noble Manifesto issued ere his earlier Government dissolved, Lord Salisbury had plainly said that they had now the power to get whatever they desired in the shape of legislation, and, although he did not pat their every fad and nostrum on the back, or flatter them until they did not wish to work at all, he showed, as he had shown before, that every well-considered measure which seemed likely to promote their real interests without endangering the safety of the State would claim his best

attention, and would, with due precautions, be enrolled upon the Statute Book. And many measures of this character resulted from the labours of the Commission which he had previously appointed to enquire into the question; and, among them, was a Bill for the establishment of Boards of Conciliation, which did much to put an end to strikes and a Bill to regulate the hours of labour in accordance with the exigencies of particular times, and trades, and places, and always with a due regard to the maintenance of our manufacturing supremacy. And, thanks to Free Education, which he owed to the efforts of the Unionists, and to the Technical Education with which they had supplemented it, John still more than held his own with his continental rivals, whilst his broadening knowledge kept him free from snares which wily politicians once had laid to lead his feet astray.

These useful measures were succeeded, thanks to Mr. Chamberlain, by a liberal scheme of National Insurance, by which the workers of the realm received a stipulated sum in time of sickness or of accident, and, at ages varying with their contributions to the State Insurance

Fund, were guaranteed a comfortable income for the rest of their lives. It added to the taxes, but it began, at once, to diminish the poor rates ; and it saved the nation from the scandal of seeing some of its most honest and deserving toilers buried in a pauper's grave.

Temperance was promoted, not by wholesale robbery, but by the growth of knowledge, coupled with such legislation as the exigencies of the case required. The power of licensing was handed over to the various local councils, under careful stipulations to prevent abuse, and Sunday Closing also was a matter which John thought it best to leave to them. The man who liked his glass of " good old English ale " could get it still, and he got it pure, and the man who found Elysium in lemonade no longer sought to force it down the throats of those who didn't. England was gradually growing " sober," but England was not ceasing to be " free."

The reasonable form of local option had been simplified and rendered capable of very wide extention by the scheme of local government which crowned the legislative programme of the Cabinet, and dwarfed, in its results, the whole of

their previous achievements. It is not too much to say that John was delighted with the scheme. For it was a step in the direction of the new idea which had come to him, in his bewilderment, like a gleam of sunshine ; and it more than won again for those who carried it the love which they had not deserved to lose. There was a certain word in John's vocabulary which he had often used, but hitherto had never comprehended. The word was Federation, and it proved a perfect talisman ; and the new idea was that in that word, when rightly understood, the clue to all his difficulties lay. But nobody appeared to understand it. Even those who talked about it most had often not the faintest glimmering of what it really implied. And none of them appeared to adequately realize its possibilities.

The dictionary defined it as "a union for purposes of government," but this might have meant anything or nothing. In its largest sense, it really meant *union for common purposes—liberty in matters of separate concern*. And there was not any earthly reason why it should be limited to "purposes of government" in the sense in which that term was generally used. People vaguely talked about a federated Empire. Let

them have a federated England first. For John had come to see that the principle was of practically universal application, and might assist him in the solution of almost every conceivable dilemma. And he had felt that, if he could get his statesmen to apply it, by way of experiment, on a small and easy scale, and let them see how well it worked at home, it would not be hard to persuade them to extend the experiment. Now, there was already a species of federation, in this new and fuller meaning of the word, at work in every corner of Great Britain. It had commenced with the creation of Town Councils. Each of these had liberty to manage the affairs of its own particular neighbourhood, but all of them were one, at Westminster, in managing the affairs of the Empire. There was union for common purposes, and freedom in matters of separate concern.

But this was only a loose and somewhat illogical application of the principle, and it was only when the Unionists had supplemented Town by County Councils that the system gained coherence, and stood upon a satisfactory basis. Each town was interested in many matters which related to itself alone, and these were left to the

Town Council ; but, as each town was also interested in the affairs of its own particular county, each was represented on the County Council, whilst both were represented in the Parliament at Westminster.

But, just as every town had matters which did not concern either County Council or Imperial Parliament, so every district, and nearly every village, had affairs peculiarly its own to see to, and rightly claimed the power to manage them itself. And, therefore, on resuming office, the Government who gave the County Councils rounded off their work by granting District Councils when the villages were too small to need a separate organization of their own, and Village Councils where the circumstances of the case demanded it. And the various Village, District, or County Councils in any given area were permitted to specially combine, at any time, for common purposes, an enlargement of the federal principle which led to most desirable results.

The scheme was simultaneously applied in England, in Scotland, and in Wales. And, throughout the three countries, every county was completely federated, and every part of it endowed with power, and with the requisite

machinery, to manage all affairs of purely local interest, subject to the intermediate authority of the larger bodies, and to the supreme control of the Imperial Parliament itself.

But there was still the question of Ireland to consider. And, in considering that, John Bull saw his way to a further development of the federal idea which would solve his own immediate difficulty, and form a stepping-stone to another and a larger federation still.

Now, just as there were many questions which concerned the village, the town, the district, or the county only, or some particular group of villages, districts, towns, or counties, so there were many questions which concerned each nation only ; and, if it were logical to apply the principle so fully to the lesser areas, it was not less logical to apply it to the larger. And among the men who most admired the previous work of Mr. Balfour there were not a few who thought that, in his introduction of the Bill to give to Pat the privilege of County Government, he had missed an opportunity. It was palpable to all who looked at things dispassionately that there was an element of reason in the cry for Home Rule.

When men enquired what sense there was in sending Pat to London every time he wanted to promote some purely local improvement scheme it puzzled the most ardent Unionist to tell them. Mr. Balfour had himself admitted the grievance, and one of his latest Bills, before the defeat of the earlier Unionist Government, had been drawn with a view to removing it. Ulstermen confessed that the existing system was an inconvenience, to put it mildly ; and Loyalists who would have fought against an independent Parliamento the death were quite prepared to admit that Irishmen were capable of dealing with Private Bills, at any rate, in Dublin.

But Mr. Balfour had merely suggested that local enquiries should be held, and that the Bills themselves should still be relegated to Westminster. And there were not a few who thought that, in his County Government Bill, he had also erred by introducing some superfluous restrictions, and by subjecting the actions of the Irish County Councillors to the check of the Criminal Judges instead of to the check of some suitable central board. It was a provision introduced in order to promote impartiality, and it was well adapted to secure that end ; but it lent itself too readily to

misconstruction, and it was not recommended by the nickname which was speedily applied to it—the “Put 'Em in the Dock Bill.”

There were many Unionists who, in the earlier stages of the Home Rule controversy, had declared their readiness to delegate to provincial, or even to national, boards a certain measure of authority, subject always to the absolute supremacy of the Imperial Parliament; and “Joe” Chamberlain, in particular, had boldly announced his adhesion to a policy of some such character as this. The unparalleled success of Mr. Balfour had diverted the public attention, for a time, from these proposals. He had shown so plainly that the government of Pat from Westminster was not only possible, but easy, and that, in the hands of men of resolution, Ireland need not any longer “block the way,” that Unionists were inclined to let well alone.

But, the more they thought of it, the more they saw that possibly a broader policy might lead to even happier results. It was absurd to try to satisfy the politicians who were related to the daughters of the horseleach; but might they not, by yielding what was fair in their

demand, remove the sole remaining semblance of a wrong? It would be a piece of monstrous tyranny to hand the men of Ulster over to their tender mercies unprotected; but Ulster had not any right to rob the rest of Ireland of anything that she could fairly claim. To a measure such as Mr. Redmond asked, or Mr. Gladstone offered, she was justified in offering whatever resistance lay in her power; and, in the event of its becoming law, most people agreed with "Grandolph" that "Ulster" would "fight, and Ulster" would "be right." But, against a measure such as this, she would not have the need, or feel the inclination, to rebel. Nay, was it not as much in her own interest as in the interest of the sister provinces? If she did resist it, her blood would be upon her own head; but those who understood her best believed that her good sense would welcome it. Pat should have his County, his District, and his Parish Councils, like the other members of the family; but their deeds should be revised, instead of by the Judges, by a *National Council*, elected by the whole of Ireland, and subject to the control of the Imperial Parliament.

John favoured this solution of the difficulty all

the more because both Taffy and Sandy were beginning to ask for a certain amount of Home Rule for themselves. Each of them had long complained that, in purely national affairs, they were both continually out-voted by the rest; and so much had Sandy felt the hardship that he had formed a special Home Rule Association of his own in order to secure fair-play. It met, at first, with little sympathy, for, unhappily, John's ministers seem quite incapable of realizing that the people are dissatisfied until the people begin to make themselves objectionable—a fact which, by the way, should always be remembered in extenuation of the many crimes attributed to Pat. The "G.O.M." had snubbed the new Association, and, of course, his worshippers had done the same. And the leading Unionists ignored it, though it was manifest to the people of a lesser order of intelligence that its aim was logical; and that, upon the lines suggested by some of its supporters, Home Rule might pass, by an almost impalpable transition, out of the region of projects which were wild, and dangerous, and revolutionary into the region of Conservative, and gradual, and logical reforms.

To exclude from Westminster the Irish mem-

bers, as the "G.O.M." had first proposed, was evidently to inflict a grievous wrong on Pat, and to insist on taxing him without allowing him a voice in the disposition of the money raised was worse than separation pure and simple, and must inevitably lead to it ; for this was the very rock on which John lost his noblest Colony. To everybody save the "G.O.M." the thing was plain ; and, had it not been for the fact that, in deference to the universal feeling, he had changed his mind upon this, as on so many other subjects, Home Rule would never have been listened to at all.

But his subsequent proposal had only made the matter worse. As a means of conciliating such of his followers as regarded the Irish members as a nuisance, and simply supported Home Rule in the hope of getting rid of them—and there were many of this sort, though they did not often own it—he had proposed to reduce the number of their representatives in the Imperial Parliament to something less than forty. But this was a remedy which was worse than the disease. If it disposed of John's complaint by depriving Pat of an advantage to which he was certainly not entitled,

it made, at once, for Pat another bran-new grievance by depriving him of the proportion he could fairly claim. It was removing one injustice only to create another, and was a sort of logic which was suited to the character of the philanthropists who shuddered with horror at the thought of turning a man out of doors who owed his landlord six years rent, or locking up the wretch who amused himself by maiming cattle and shooting old men in the legs, but rather liked the thought of letting old ladies die of starvation because they could not get their dues, and shooting down the men of Ulster because they loved the Empire and were loyal to the Queen.

The Unionists, of course, protested, and proved again that they were better friends to Pat than those who fawned on him by insisting that, in any Bill which might be passed, he should be represented in the same proportion as the rest of the family. But, if it were unjust to even dream of any other treatment, it was ridiculous to allow him to govern himself, and, at the same time, to have the right to interfere with them. And, although his voice and vote might be restricted to imperial affairs, he

could use them as a lever to promote his private ends, and could prevent the representatives of Taffy, and Sandy, and John from carrying out their local legislation by the simple expedient of defeating them on some imperial question. The whole proposal bristled with anomalies, and was calculated to produce the maximum of friction and the minimum of benefit ; and its rank injustice would materially affect them all.

There was only one way out of the difficulty. It would have saved the "G.O.M." from half his troubles, and would have turned a scheme which nearly everyone in England looked upon as treason to the Empire into a scheme which nearly everyone in England would have recognized as eminently sane. But the "G.O.M." appeared to be quite unable to grasp it, and the bulk of his advisers were as blind as he. The Unionists, with some exceptions, either did not understand it, or were afraid to mention it for fear of misconstruction, or were so content with Chaos that they did not care to tread the road which led to Cosmos, or so wrapped up in the United Kingdom that they never gave a thought, except by way of peroration, to the possibility of a United Empire. The plan which men of every

party deemed a triumph of constructive statesmanship when carried out in Canada, and hailed with acclamation in Australia, and had spent much blood and gold to try to consummate in Africa, and counted wisdom of the highest type among the tiny islets in the Caribbean Sea, they never seemed to dream of as a possible solution of the evils which prevailed at home.

But John was wiser than his leaders, and, to him, absorbed in the idea which had come so opportunely, the path to follow was quite unmistakable. Imperial Federation had been, as yet, a vague conception which had won his sympathies, but which he did not rightly comprehend ; but the way to it lay plainly through domestic federation. The federal principle would solve the troubles of his little Kingdom just as it had solved the troubles of his Great Dominion, and just as it was solving the troubles of Australia, and just as it was going to solve the feuds between the hostile races at the Cape. And it would pave the way to a United Empire. Beneath its magic touch, the "paper union" of the rival realms at home would deepen gradually into "a union of hearts," and "the union of hearts" which was practically all that held the colonies

together would be complemented by a union on a grander scale than any he had ever dreamed of up to now—

“ A union of hearts, and a union of hands,
A union none ” should “ sever ;
A union of homes, and a union of lands,
And the flag of our union for ever.”

Anyhow, he would make the experiment. He would not any longer preach a gospel he was indisposed to practice, and prescribe for others remedies he hesitated to apply to himself. And he had made it evident to his friends, the Unionists, before restoring them to favour, that he should expect them to proceed on broader lines than heretofore ; and that, much as he admired them, and warmly as he recognised the splendid service they had rendered in the past, he should like them better if they would recall their earlier pledges, and not mistake quiescence for content across the Channel, or think, because Taffy and Sandy usually obeyed the law, that they were absolutely satisfied with its provisions, and persuaded that the present Constitution was beyond amendment.

“ Joe ” Chamberlain was foremost in pro-

moting the new policy. Indeed, it largely owed its origin to him, though, in the tumult of the intervening controversy, he had appeared, for a time, to have somewhat lost sight of it. And, put as he was so well qualified to put it, his sturdy phalanx in the army of the Union had hailed it readily as offering a *viâ media* safe to tread, and leading plainly to desirable results. And, although a few Conservatives of the fossil order were disposed to deprecate the scheme, the bulk of them had long outgrown their ancient prejudices, and begun to see that

“That man’s the true Conservative .

Who lops the moulder’d branch away,”

or grafts upon the ancient tree some healthy sapling suited to the time. And, just as they had accepted the County Franchise when they knew that it would be coupled with Redistribution, and just as they had swallowed Free Education when they saw their way to do it without unfairness to the voluntary schools, so they were quite prepared to grant Home Rule as soon as it had ceased to be a danger to the Empire, and could be carried out on safe, and moderate, and reasonable lines.

And, in obedience to John's behest, they put their heads together and produced a Bill. It was delightfully simple, and everybody took to it at once. Nay, many of the enemy, quite weary of their wandering in the political wilderness, united in promoting it; and some, indeed, of the "Irreconcilables," grown tired of following the phantom of a Parliament they felt that they would never get, were good enough to speak of it with favour, and it was carried through both Houses with unusual *éclat*.

The scheme was, briefly, this : One Man One Vote was coupled with One Vote One Value, and embodied in an Act which divided the whole Kingdom into equal electoral districts, subject to readjustment after every Census. This meant that Pat's proportion of members was much reduced, and Ulster's share of these substantially increased; and that Taffy, and Sandy, and John received exactly the number to which they were respectively entitled.

The operation of the Act was specially suspended until another Act had been passed extending to Ireland a system of Village, District, and County Councils, upon similar lines to the system

already adopted in England, Scotland and Wales, but with special safeguards to prevent abuse ; and this was followed, in the same Session, by an¹ Act which authorized the members representing each of the four countries to sit in their respective capitals as National Councils, at the beginning of every year, to deal with questions which were outside the scope of the Village, the District, or the County Councils, and yet of purely national concern. These were easily defined, in spite of Mr. Gladstone's *non possumus*. For example, they took over all the functions of the Local Government Boards, and were empowered to pass canal and railway bills, and to deal with private legislation generally.

In Ireland, the functions lately vested in the Congested Districts Board were delegated to their care, and the various Land Acts had operated so effectually, and removed so many sources of

1 This is the suggestion of a writer in the "Weekly Despatch," and is merely an extension of Mr. Bright's idea that the members of the different countries should act as Grand Committees to deal with the details of the various Bills in which they were locally interested. It has been received with favour by the Scottish Home Rule Association, and is adopted here on account of its simplicity. Special representatives to sit in the National Councils could, of course, be separately appointed, if preferred, and the number need not necessarily be limited to the number of representatives in the Imperial Parliament.

friction, that, even in questions appertaining to the soil, they were entrusted with a certain amount of legislative and executive authority, whilst the actions of the County Councils were controlled by them instead of by the Irish Judges. This power of control applied to all four countries. Exactly as the Town, the Village, and the District Councils were made subordinate to the County Councils, so the County Councils were subordinate to the National Councils, and the National Councils, in their turn, to the Imperial Parliament.

In England, and Scotland, and Wales, the people were so much accustomed to self-government that there was little fear of an abuse of any of the privileges thus conferred. In Ireland, however, the case was different. But, when all the Acts came simultaneously into operation, and the earliest National Council met in Dublin, it was found, as a consequence of the readjustment of electoral areas, and the growth of the Conservative instinct which had resulted from the creation of a peasant proprietary, and the gradual reaction in the minds of a people who were simply sick of hunting a mirage, that fully half of its members were Unionists, and most of these Conservatives ; and that violent

or confiscatory legislation was almost out of the question. But, to "make assurance doubly sure," precautions had been taken to prevent precipitate action, and a body corresponding somewhat with the grave and well-fed individuals who are known as aldermen was appointed as a sort of Second Chamber. They were elected by the National Councillors, but sat for a longer term, and retired in regular rotation.

But the one paramount safeguard was to be found in the maintenance of the undisputed and indisputable supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. The English, Scotch, and Welsh National Councils acted with the sobriety and good sense which had been generally expected of them. But there was, of course, at first, some litt'e friction in the Irish Council. People who have been for centuries divided do not work together with perfect smoothness all at once, and attempts were made, at times, to go beyond the sphere assigned, and to carry various measures which were ill-advised. When this was so, the Second Chamber generally did its duty. But once or twice it failed, and then the Viceroy, acting on instructions from the

Central Cabinet, forthwith proceeded to impose his veto. And the friction lessened every year. When the Councillors from the four countries assembled annually at Westminster as Members of the Imperial Parliament, they were seldom called upon to interfere with local matters, though, of course, they had the power ; and they were thus enabled to devote to the discussion of more weighty subjects the time which their importance had so long deserved. And the Councils ultimately acted with such circumspection that their functions were one by one extended until the very Redmondites admitted that they could not reasonably ask for more. The principle of unity for common purposes and liberty in matters of purely separate concern was liberally applied, and its success had soon been put beyond dispute. Never had the four adjacent realms been so united, and never had they been so proud of themselves and of each other. Pat had not ceased to be an Irishman, nor Sandy to revere the "land of the mountain and the flood," nor Taffy to proclaim to all the world how proud he was to wander "among" his "ancient mountains, and in" his "lovely vales," and least of all had John forgotten to be true to "Shakespeare's home,

and Alfred's realm." But all of them were one in love for each other, and in love for the Greater Englands, and the Greater Irelands, and the Greater Scotlands, and the Greater Waleses to whose shores so many of their children sailed.

John's "tight little island" was now so adequately organized that he began to make the federation he had gradually achieved the basis of a scheme which had been hovering vaguely in his mind ever since the happy morning when he had kindled to enthusiasm at the dawn of the idea which had already solved the Irish problem, and enabled him to put the whole of his internal system of government upon a satisfactory footing. More and more, as he reflected on the sorrows of his poorer children, and the gross disparities existing in the life around him, had he turned towards Socialism as the only way to remedy the wrong. But Socialism, with him, was quite compatible with rank Conservatism. He loathed to hear the ribald orators who flung their mud at everybody better than themselves, and knew that half of them were quite as selfish as the men whom they denounced. He could not bear to listen to the fierce attacks upon the folk whose only fault consisted in their extra business capacity,

or their good fortune in inheriting the gold bequeathed them by their sires. To propose to suddenly appropriate their goods and chattels, or to carry off their cash bags and bestow them on the multitude, appeared to him a piece of simple robbery, and the lock-ups or the lunatic asylum was the proper place for the men who preached such dangerous doctrines. And, when they backed their arguments with dynamite, their necks were in the noose before they knew it. Good never came of evil, and the happier England which he longed so ardently to see must not be founded on a policy of wholesale plunder, or accelerated by the deadly logic of the bomb.

But there was not any earthly reason why he should not cautiously extend the Socialism which prevailed already in so many of his towns. They furnished cemeteries for the accommodation of their dead—why should they not build houses for the accommodation of their living? They made their own gas, and supplied their own water, and paved their own streets, and provided their own parks, and baths, and libraries—why should they not also work their own tramways, provide their own theatres, and manufacture goods for exportation, or for inter-

change with other places? It was only an extension of a principle already recognized, and, as they gradually increased its application, they would find employment, not for a few dozen officials, artisans, and scavengers, as now, but for a few hundreds, and, ultimately, as the various industries were one by one acquired, for the whole population. Their profits would enable them to pay to all whom they employed a liberal wage, and leave a handsome surplus to expend upon municipal improvements, and to use in the reduction, and the ultimate extinction, of the rates. Each business would be taken over at a proper price; the managers and men might still be utilized, and paid according to the value of their services; and the transformation might be slowly brought about without the slightest friction, without injustice to the rich, with immeasurable advantage to the poor, and with incalculable benefit to the life of each municipality. The whole system might be worked, in every centre, on a federal basis, and the danger which some dreaded that Socialism might reduce all men to a dead level of mediocrity would be avoided by the fact that the ablest men in every branch of industry would

be appointed by their fellow townsfolk to the most important posts. Everybody would be happy, but everybody would not be equal.

And, just in the same way, the Village Councils might rent the land, or purchase it outright, and work it on the most accepted principles, diverting the people from the towns by paying them a decent wage, and applying the profits, for agriculture, properly adapted to the altered circumstances of the time, may still be made to pay, to the improvement of the locality, and the promotion of the physical and intellectual recreation of all the villagers.

The various towns and villages might interchange their products, and send the surplus into other counties, or to other realms, and the task of regulating the exchange would naturally devolve upon the County and the National Councils.

It seemed, undoubtedly, a big experiment, but the machinery was ready to hand, the public mind was ripe for some reform, and, in the absence of a reasonably moderate scheme, might fly, in its impatience, into methods which were rashly revolutionary. To carry out

the plan in its entirety would doubtless be the work of years. But in every town the leaven was already working, and John had confidence in his idea, and saw in it the ultimate solution of the social difficulty.

Already, in addition to its earlier triumphs, it had shown John how to save his oldest and his dearest institution from destruction, and had given to the United Kingdom a United Church. The miracle had been achieved with little help from Parliament, but one or two sagacious bits of legislation had helped to clear the way for it.

It was the tithes which gave the cry for Disestablishment its greatest force, and, though the Act which had removed them to the shoulders of the landlords had materially abated a grievance concerning which there had been much complaint, they were still unpopular, and the tenants had to pay them still in the shape of an additional rent, if not in the older and more irritating form. But it was evident that they were never likely to be regarded with any superfluity of favour, and many thought that they should cease to be paid at all. Now there was only one equitable mode of dealing with them, and that was to

commute them. With state assistance this was easily accomplished, and everybody hailed the arrangement as an honest settlement of an ancient difficulty. And the measure introduced to take away the scandal which had arisen from the fact that the livings of the churches sometimes fell into hands unworthy of the sacred charge was followed by another, which, under proper limitations, gave the people of each parish power to choose their own minister. Moreover, the ordinances of the church were rendered more elastic, and there was not any room for the scenes which had formerly arisen between the Ritualists and the Evangelicals, for the views of each were harmonized, and every congregation was empowered to choose a pastor suited to its individual tastes. A reasonable ceremonial lent its charm to every service, but no longer was "the heart of the matter" lost in the mere mummary of outward show. And the Church was doing its duty nobly. It had ceased to proselytize, and begun to practice. Its ministers no longer gave themselves airs and talked through their noses. Instead of snubbing those who did not quite agree with them, except when they required their money or

desired their votes, they frankly owned that every man had a perfect right to entertain his own opinion, and to worship the Common Father in the manner suited to his need. Instead of rousing in the breast of every chapel-goer a double love for his somewhat narrow creed by the increasing narrowness of theirs, and wounding his pride by their exclusiveness, or patronizingly inviting him to own himself a heretic, and creep back, like a silly sheep, to the fold which he had only left because "the hungry sheep" looked "up, and" were "not fed," they said that he was welcome there, and they would willingly receive him. But they added now, that, in order to save the scandal which the spectacle of a divided Christendom afforded, they were quite prepared to come down from the pinnacle of their superiority, and to make all reasonable concessions, and, if only he could see his way to do the same, they would willingly meet him half way.

So much had they improved that many thought it possible for some, at least, of the Dissenting bodies to be absorbed into the bosom of the Mother Church, and many of the rising race who had been born in the shadow of some village Bethel dear to the hearts of the previous

generation preferred the grander service of the little edifice about whose soft gray walls "the rude forefathers of the hamlet" slept, and found in its new ritual the spiritual solace and the intellectual nutriment which they had failed to find elsewhere.

But this ideal was too noble to be realized at once. There were difficulties all round. A portion of the Church itself insisted very foolishly upon some rather childish notion known as apostolical succession, and some of its members thought that the baptismal water was more efficacious than the sacrificial blood. The Wesleyans attached immense importance to a principle which was known as instantaneous conversion. The Primitives were fond of noise, and the Baptists of bathing. The Congregationalists mixed Mr. Gladstone with the matter. The Salvationists had boundless faith in somewhat inartistic banners, and instruments of music which were usually out of tune. The Catholics believed too much, and the Unitarians too little. Of the two hundred minor sects or so, each laid its special stress upon some indispensable (but absolutely unimportant) detail; and, in face of all this, amalgamation was evidently impossible, at any rate for the present.

But, if amalgamation were impossible, it did not follow that federation was the same.

“If my crowd of churches differ on a dozen points,” said John, “there are quite as many points concerning which they all agree. If some are lifted by the savour of incense, and the sound of music, and some regard them both as the inventions of the Evil One, they each believe that drunkenness is fatal to the nation’s welfare. If some delight in drawling disquisitions from the lips of clerical young graduates, and some are quite content with listening to lay preachers, who occupy the pulpit on Sunday and mend their neighbour’s boots next day, both believe that immorality is eating into England’s life. If some could never stand set prayers, and others are irritated by the extemporaneous irrelevance which too often takes their place, both know that it is right to minister to the sick, and to visit the afflicted, and to feed the poor, and to seek by every reasonable means to make life happier and easier for the needy and the suffering. In the crusade against vice, and intemperance, and slavery, and cruelty to animals and men, and in the task of carrying to the heathen, at home and abroad, the rudimentary principles of Christianity, they may

surley work together. These purposes are common to them all. There is not room for any marked divergence of opinion here. And division weakens them. And every double organization for one object is a waste of energy. They need not listen to the same preachers, or attend the same services, or conform to the same ritual, or swallow the same creed ; but in the practical Christianity which displays itself in honest work for the amelioration of the human lot ; in the 'pure religion and undefiled' which 'is to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction,' they are one at heart, and might be one in effort and in organization. And, if the absorption by the mother church of all the lesser churches is not yet possible, the federation of the churches on such lines as these may surely be achieved, and, probably, may pave the way to a United Christendom. Anyhow," said John, "suppose we try it." And try it he did.

All the temperance societies, and all the societies for the promotion of purity, and all the societies for the spread of education, and all the societies for the suppression of slavery (white and black), and nearly all the societies for the alleviation of human suffering in its divers

other forms which had existed in connection with the various churches were amalgamated, each separate religious body being represented on the committees and boards of management in proportion to its members and its contributions. And all, being animated by one purpose, worked amicably together. Missionaries no longer fought their battles out before astounded Heathendom. The apostles of the rival creeds chose different localities, and so arranged their programmes as to avoid collision or encroachment on each others preserves. In the whole range of social, educational, intellectual, recreative, and philanthropic activity, the members of the several denominations worked together. The village church and chapel would unite in arranging winter lectures, concerts, debates, and entertainments; in organizing united cricket teams, and in providing libraries, reading rooms, gymnasiums, and village clubs, sometimes in concert with the Village Councils, and sometimes on independent lines. In the towns, the twenty various sects would do the same. And the local federations would unite in periodically sending representatives to the great district or national congresses upon the questions which were under their im-

mediate care. And nearly all the different religious bodies soon discovered that upon a score of subjects they could work in harmony, and greatly gain in strength, without the sacrifice of any single article of any single creed. And soon they got to understand each other, and to tolerate each others views, and even to discern, at last, that, after all, the essence of the creed of Christendom was unity, and not dissension—love, and not hatred. Their points of difference speedily diminished their points of contact rapidly increased, and they presently began to exchange pulpits, and to have United Services. Indeed, they found, at last, that they had so much in common that their federation had become a mere arrangement for the better management of the local affairs of the one church with the thousand ramifications—the great democratic Church of England, which regulated its ritual in accordance with the preferences of each locality, and was broad enough to embrace all who believed in human brotherhood and followed in the steps of Christ.

Each church selected its own rector or vicar, and the ranks of eligible candidates were swollen by the admission of the pastors of all the various

dissenting bodies, which made the curates look to their preaching, and the dissenting students to their Greek ; and each could change the chosen one whenever the majority of the parishioners believed a change to be desirable. Some churches were high, some low, some broad, and each was able to adopt, from the amended Book of Common Prayer, a form of service suited to its individual preferences.

These rectors and vicars appointed their own curates, and met, at stated intervals, in every diocese, for mutual deliberation, under the presidency of a bishop chosen for a definite term by the votes of all the ministers in the diocese. And democracy prevailed in church and state alike. And, consequently, each reflected England's life, and each was representative of its ideals.

Thus the union which good souls had dreamed of in the shadow of the hills of Switzerland was gradually realized in the shadow of the hills of England. The Scottish Presbyterian Churches had previously united under a similar arrangement, and so the cry for Disestablishment was disposed of to the general satisfaction. And Sandy now threw in his lot with John, upon a federal

basis, and the English and the Scottish Churches, whilst retaining various local customs and privileges, were substantially one. As for Taffy, he had made such a pother about the question that John Bull had said, at last, with ill-concealed disgust, "He won't be happy till he gets it," and thrown to him the sop he clamoured for, declaring that he would leave him to his cheese and his chapels. And then Taffy became a Conservative, and he and John were better friends than ever. And, of course, like Sandy, he federated with the English Church.

Pat's Protestant descendants likewise federated, first among themselves, and then with the Church of England. The Church of Rome in all these realms still held aloof; but, mixing, as its members did, with Protestants of every shade in works of charity, it learned to understand them better, and to hate them less, and, now that its opponents were united, it began to feel its weakness more, and to doubt the wisdom of maintaining so tenaciously the old unbending attitude. Perhaps the Pope was not infallible, after all, and possibly the truth might lie between the two extremes. And then there came a Cardinal of Newman's type, and, feeling to the full the evils

of the long division, he set himself to see if it might not be healed. The English Church responded to his invitation to discuss the points of difference, and gradually a scheme was framed which brought them into closer touch, and ultimately led to a United Christendom.

But, ere that consummation came, the new idea which had put John's house in order, made Pat happy and contented, and for ever stopped the empty jangle of the rival creeds, had wrought an even grander transformation in the destinies of Oceana.

CHAPTER V.

THE FEDERATION OF THE EMPIRE.

In order to tell the story with due sequence, we shall be obliged to retrace our steps a little ; in fact, to go back to the foundation of the Imperial Federation League. That body had done a good deal to give expression to the vague conception which had slowly taken root in the brains of a few deep thinkers who could see beyond the immediate strife of parties, and all the hideous turmoil of the hour, and ponder carefully the problem of the Empire's future fate—that Empire which had grown to its gigantic size in spite of the supineness of the so-called statesmen who had spent their time in petty squabbles over trifles here at home—the “Little Englanders” who never looked beyond their noses, and had instincts of the “beaver” species only. The thought had first been launched in London, at some meetings held in 1869. Inch by inch it “won its widening way,” but few, at first, were

found to speak of it with favour, or, indeed, to turn their thoughts to it at all.

The Royal Colonial Institute had kept the new-born flame alive ; but, with the founding of the League, it began to burn with an increasing ardour, and to throw an unexpected light upon the darkness of the coming time. A number of eminent colonial statesmen promptly offered their adhesion to the principle, and several leading men at home had lent it the benefit of their advocacy. The sending to the Soudan of an army from Australia had helped it on "by leaps and bounds"; the "Kith and Kineries" had given it a mighty stimulus; and when Lord Salisbury, at the League's request, had summoned to the capital, as previously described, a Conference of all the leading Colonies, it really looked as if the project which had originally claimed such scant consideration was making genuine headway. An Empire Club was founded, and the Imperial Institute succeeded it. Many Liberals had begun to speak of the idea in sympathetic terms, and the Conservatives at once enrolled it on their party programme. "Empire and Liberty" was taking tangible shape, at last, and a fancy which had hitherto been looked upon as the monopoly of

the dreamer was slowly, but surely, coming "within the range of practical politics."

And the war of tariffs, which had waxed increasingly severe, was working strongly in the same direction, though on somewhat different lines. The Fair Trade League had been inaugurated at about the same time as the League with larger objects, and a wider platform ; and, at the root of its policy, was a scheme for the preferential treatment of the Colonies in their trade relations with the Mother Country. But the Fair Trade League had displayed the cloven hoof of Protection too boldly to win the popular support, and, mainly as the result of Brother Jonathan's determined effort to exclude our trade, and to ruin Canada unless she would consent to forswear her ancient fealty, it was followed by another organization, on less objectionable lines, which was known as the United Empire Trade League. The policy which it announced was to develop "by all possible means the commercial relations between the Mother Country and the Colonies, and between the Colonies themselves." The importance of this policy was declared to be paramount. Some of the foremost of John Bull's political advisers at once enrolled themselves as members ;

three colonial premiers, three ex-premiers, a number of other high colonial dignitaries, and more than three hundred members of the various Parliaments of Oceana were on its General Councils; and, in the course of a few months, three thousand influential citizens had given it the sanction of their names.

But many saw, in the new League, the same cloven hoof of Protection, though the difference between the two associations was that, with the first, Protection was a policy, and with the second, "a hateful incident" only. Unhappily, Free Trade had become a fetish, and the man who would not fall down and worship it was commonly regarded as a fool. It did not matter that every nation in the world, and all our leading Colonies, with one exception (soon to follow their example) were resolutely opposed to it. So much the worse for them. And the opinion of "the civilized world," which John was asked to accept as conclusive in regard to Home Rule, he was politely requested to treat with absolute contempt in regard to his commercial policy. And to accuse a man of entertaining the idea of "taxing the food of the people" was tantamount to calling him a rogue.

John Bull was positively terrified lest he should lay himself open to this dreadful accusation, but the good old soul had entirely overlooked the fact that, at that very moment, he was taxing the food of the people to the tune of several millions every year. But the taxes were mainly on tea, and coffee, and cocoa, and fruit, each one of which had become a necessity in every home of the United Kingdom—as much a necessity as the immortal loaf itself; and to have remitted the duties on these might incidentally have assisted India, and Jamaica, and the other Colonies in the increasing struggle for existence; and to aim at helping Oceana by such expedients as these was evidently not to be thought of.

John's children suffered, but it could not honestly be said that the English landlord pocketed the proceeds, or that the English manufacturer derived the most shadowy semblance of advantage from the tax, and therefore it was perfectly defensible in itself, and, moreover, necessary as a means of raising revenue.

“But why not raise the revenue by taxing the products of my enemies rather than those of my friends?” John pertinently asked. “Assuming that these several millions are absolutely requisite,

and that it is even permissible to 'tax the food of the people' in order to obtain them, why should I not remove the duty from the tea, and the coffee, and the cocoa, and the fruit which the Colonies are so eager to send me to the wheat of Brother Jonathan, who bars his gates against me, and seeks, 'by sordid means and mercenary proffers, to lure' my children 'from their allegiance?' Suppose I raise exactly the same amount as at present—not a penny more or less—in this way, how will the cost of living be affected? Does it make any difference to a man if he loses a farthing on his bread, and gains it on his tea? In short, would not his position be precisely the same, whilst India and Jamaica would be better off, and Canada delighted to supply the wheat which had previously come from the United States, and, in exchange, to lower her tariff, and give us preference in her markets over all the rival suitors for her trade? I can quite see that Protection for Protection's sake is a fallacy, that it is best to 'buy in the cheapest market,' and that I should be a fool for doing otherwise; but am I not a bigger fool for taxing myself in a manner so unfortunate that I offend my children, do not in any way benefit myself, and lose my leverage for bringing other nations to their knees? More-

over, apart from all these considerations, if, by the establishment of a tariff, I pay more for what I buy, do I not recoup myself by paying less in taxes? And are you quite certain that Brother Jonathan, and Johnny Crapaud, and Johnny Schmoker, and all the other members of the family of nations are such fools as you say? Doubtless we 'are the people, and wisdom' will 'die with' us, but it sometimes takes a wise man to be a fool!"

At this John Bull's advisers would grow frantic. "What!" they cried. "Reverse the policy of Bright and Cobden? Forsake the principles of Adam Smith?"—forgetting that almost every principle that Adam Smith had ever preached they had begun to violate; and that Mr. Bright's opinion on the greatest question of the day they were in the habit of treating with contemptuous unconcern. "Why, you will raise the price of the four pound loaf, and"—this with a veritable shudder—"put money into the pockets of the landlord!" They left the poor farmer, who was being slowly bled to death, quite out of the question, perhaps because he happened to be a Conservative; but the fact that the landlord might possibly derive some small advantage from the scheme

appeared to settle the matter. Whoever else might gain or lose, not one penny should go into the pockets of the individuals who "toil not, neither do they spin"; but spend their lives and fortunes in looking after the welfare of their estates, supporting charities, and bearing all "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" simply because they happen to be the sons of their fathers, and the descendants of the lords of Rou.

But John was not convinced. And the mere fact that he might be helping the landlords, or assisting the farmers, or improving the prospects of the labourers, or encouraging Jamaica, or doing a good turn to his enterprising children by the waters of the far Saskatchewan, did not seem to him to be by any means a conclusive argument against a scheme which would bind Canada to him, and pave the way, in process time, to Free Trade throughout the Empire.

"Free Trade is a capital thing," said John. "Universal Free Trade would be delightful. But, if I cannot have Free Trade with all the world, why should I not have Free Trade with one-fifth of it?"

And, somehow, nobody seemed able to answer him.

Moreover, it grew plainer every day that the only lasting bond that would keep Oceana one and indivisible was the bond of self-interest. The most romantic couple who ever existed could not "live on love." Blood was thicker than water, but gold was stronger still. Sentiment was all very well in its way, but it had to "plump" its "exquisite proportions on bread and butter." Utility was the ultimate law, and it was only when blood and sentiment were one with it that they would form that "threefold cord" which "is not quickly broken." Canada was, without doubt, devotedly attached to John; but even her affection had shown signs of cooling when Brother Jonathan began to close his markets in her face. And everybody seemed to think that she would finally accept the advantages he had to give, unless John offered her a *quid pro quo*. And, when self-interest had united her to Jonathan, she would soon forget that sentiment united her to John. Commercial intercourse would lead to political union; patriotic impulses could not successfully compete with practical advantages; and,

as soon as John's descendants commenced to feel that there was not anything to be gained by maintaining the connection with the head of the family, or that other realms could grant them better terms than he, or that they could afford to shift for themselves, and figure on the world's stage as independent actors in the drama of the ages, they would assuredly elect to do so. The ties of blood would lose their influence with the lapse of years, unless, indeed, they were supported by the baser ties of "filthy lucre." And the flowers of loyalty and patriotism could only bloom if, at the root of the imperial tree, there lay community of interest.

Now, at the present time, John's family had much to offer him. They might contribute to the maintenance of his navy, and supplement his armies by their own; they might bear their fair proportion of the cost incurred on their behalf; and last, and most important, they might open their ports to his merchandise, and treat him better than his rivals, seeing how much they owed to him for his protection, and how they had emerged from childhood safely thanks to the incessant watchfulness of the paternal eye.

But they were eminently practical—too practical to be quite fair, John thought. The benefit of his protection they had already, and they got it for nothing. To have repealed the tariff on the goods the old man sent them would have been a piece of pure philanthropy. He had not anything to give them in exchange. If he, on his part, would allow them some advantage over their foreign competitors, they might, perhaps, be disposed to reciprocate the privilege. Indeed, Canada went to the length of openly announcing her willingness to do so, and both Houses of her Parliament had un-animously asked him to unbind their hands,¹ which were tied by several foolish Treaties, in order to permit of this. But, so long as he continued to tax their corn, and their cotton, and their wool, and allowed their rivals to supply him with those commodities on equal terms, it was not likely that many of them, out of pure good nature, would

¹ See the Treaty of Commerce with Belgium, in 1862, which contains the stipulation that "articles, the produce or manufacture of Belgium, shall not be subject in the British Colonies to other or higher duties than those which are or may be imposed upon similar articles of British origin," a stipulation repeated in the Treaty with the German Zollverein, in 1865, and extended to all countries whose Treaties with the United Kingdom contain a most favoured nation clause. There are upwards of twenty-two of these, so that our hands are practically tied all round.

feel disposed to forego the larger portion of their revenue, and admit John's manufactures duty free.

But, once let John afford them privileges he refused to others, and they would meet him half-way. Both would benefit. Forthwith a chain a thousandfold more strong than that of sentiment would bind them to each other. Every British vessel which entered their ports to bring them manufactures and machinery, and to carry back the produce of their pasture-lands and harvest-fields, would help to knit them into one. And as surely as Free Trade between Canada and Brother Jonathan would lead to union, so surely would Free Trade between John Bull and Oceana prevent the possibility of separation.

Day by day, this dream developed in the old man's mind, and more and more he longed to put it into practice. But he was thwarted at every turn. At the very root of its realization lay the necessity of discriminating between Oceana and the other nations. And, to enable this to be done, it might be necessary to impose fresh duties on foreign imports, or even to add another farthing to the cost of the poor man's loaf. And, as I have already explained, nearly all John's advisers

regarded the mere suggestion of such a thing with horror. It turned Sir William Harcourt frantic ; it made Sir Wilfrid Lawson weep ; it drove the Cobden Club into a delirium ; and it sent the "Grand Old Man " into hysterics. It even scandalized the "Standard " ; and the "Markiss" himself, brave as he was, and independent as he was, on most questions, scarcely dared to breathe of such a thing. Once, upon the verge of an Election, he had ventured to observe that, in the war of tariffs, we had flung away our arms, and immediately the country rang with fierce denunciations, and, throughout the realm, a thousand lying tongues began to spread the tale that he desired to raise the people's bread to famine prices, and to flourish on the sorrows of the starving poor.

And the Empire was perishing for the sake of a superstition.

But, every year, John thought more for himself, and became less amenable to party catch-words, and the shibboleths which various wind-bags shouted in his ears. The return of an era of bad trade had troubled him, the attitude of Canada had set him thinking, and in Australia he saw the very problem which distracted him, and

almost frightened him out of his wits, made light of, and a proposal made to build a Commonwealth upon these very foundations. For the sake of free trade throughout Australia, free-trading New South Wales had offered, through her representatives, to place a tariff on the goods which came to her from all the other continents. And, for the sake of free trade with New South Wales and with each other, the rest of the Australian states seemed ready to admit each other's produce duty free. Here was the whole problem in a nutshell. Protectionists and Free Traders alike were prepared to modify their views for the sake of a compromise which would make them permanently one. And, as New South Wales was to Australia, so was the United Kingdom to the British Empire. It was quite true that New South Wales had afterwards become protectionist herself, but the principle had been admitted, and formed, indeed, the fundamental feature of Australia's scheme.

And, whilst John Bull was weighing all these matters carefully over, he was one day gratified to read that the "Markiss" had consented to receive a deputation from both Leagues, and listen to the arguments they had to urge. And

they could scarcely have gone to a better man. He it was into whose hands had fallen the banner bequeathed to England by the Earl of Beaconsfield. He it was who had kept peace within the boundaries of Oceana, and added more than two million miles to John's imperial domain. And he it was to whom the first Colonial Conference was due—by whom the earliest decided step towards Imperial Federation had been taken.

The Federationists believed that, now, a second step might fittingly succeed it ; and the object of their visit was to ask him to convoke another Conference. And John looked on with much anxiety, and wondered whether even his friend, the "Markiss," could sufficiently emancipate himself from the red tape bondage which, somehow, seemed to curse the country so, as to incline his ear to their request. And, much to his surprise, for no other statesman had ever appeared to adequately grasp the true conditions of the problem, having heard their tale, and listened to the hackneyed formula that they had not any cut and dried scheme to lay before him, and to the wish which they expressed that he should call another Conference, the "Markiss" told them bluntly that their policy of "masterly inactivity" was played

out, and that there was not any virtue in their plea.

“ I think,” said he, with gentle irony, “ that we have almost come to the time when schemes *should* be proposed, and, without them, we shall not get very far.” And he boldly added that, in order to create a United Empire, two things were necessary—a Zollverein, or Customs Union, and a Kriegsverein, or War Union. This elementary proposition did not appear to have occurred to anyone before. And the frank admission of facts which every statesman hitherto had consistently blinked, coupled as it was with warm expressions of encouragement, and a distinct intimation that it would be useless to call a Conference until some scheme was framed for its consideration, of course, set everybody thinking.

A day or two afterwards, the United Empire Trade Leaguers called on him, and then also he received with not a little sympathy. But he did not raise delusive hopes. He knew as well as most men what a howl was raised if any touched, however tenderly, the Free Trade fetish, for, more than once, that howl had echoed ominously in his ears ; but he plainly

showed that with their objects he was largely in accord. He roundly denounced the Treaties they had asked him to revoke, and practically promised that, if they would win the country over to their way of thinking, they might look to him to be the instrument to carry out the policy proposed, and so create, at any rate, the Zollverein the need of which he had already emphasized.

And the United Empire Trade League, encouraged by the interview, commenced, at once, the task of making converts ; and the Imperial Federation League came down from the platform of its platitudes, and ceased to indulge in annual generalities, and retired into its shell to grapple with the difficulties indicated, and endeavour to propound a plan ; for he had made it plain that, when this had been accomplished, he would gladly ask the Colonies to meet for its consideration.

“ Alas for the vanity of human expectations ! ” A year or more elapsed, and they produced their scheme ; but the place the “ Markiss ” had so wisely filled was occupied by another, and “ the best Government of the century ” had been dismissed from Downing Street, with an

ingratitude unparalleled in recent history. Happily, however, in the ranks of their successors there was one, at any rate, who cared for Oceana, and who could

“ see

Beyond the borough and the shire,”

and carry out, as far as his coadjutors allowed, a policy which did “ not flinch or fail.” That statesman was the Earl of Rosebery—the man who had saved Uganda, and simply loved Home Rule because, to him, it marked a step upon the road to a United Empire.

Imperial Federation had elicited his sympathies from the first. He had served the League in the capacity of President, and he, if anyone, would naturally look upon its aims with kindness now. The plan was duly laid before him, and he spoke of it with favour ; but its progenitors expressly said that the suggested Conference ought not to be convened until the Government were satisfied that the time was opportune, and that a favourable reception of the new proposals might be reasonably hoped for.

That time was not yet. Amid the hubbub of domestic troubles, and the daily danger of

international embroilments, there was little opportunity to deal with matters of such moment ; and, much as the new Foreign Secretary might have been disposed to call the Conference and carry out the scheme, with a divided Cabinet, a precarious majority, and a ministerial life which, owing to the rash and foolish pledges of his colleagues, was " not," by any means, " a happy one," he was compelled to defer the execution of the project to " a more convenient season," and to urge the League to occupy the interval in awakening public interest in the policy proposed.

In consequence of this, ¹ the sister Leagues

1 For the information of any who may like to join either of these organizations, or to learn more about the policies which they respectively espouse, I may say that the offices of the Imperial Federation League are at 30, Charles Street, Berkeley Square, London, W., and those of the United Empire Trade League at 1, Grosvenor Square, London. Communications addressed to the Secretary of either body will receive immediate attention. All who pay an Annual Registration Fee of a shilling may be enrolled as members of the former. An Annual Subscription of five shillings will entitle them to a copy of the monthly journal, and for a guinea a year they will receive all the League's new literature. The qualification for a seat on the Council is an Annual Subscription of two guineas. Any lady may have her name inserted on the Britannia Roll by paying a Registration Fee of two shillings per annum. Six shillings will secure a copy of the journal, and a guinea all literature, as well as qualify for election on the Council. The subscription is optional in the case of the United Empire Trade League.

redoubled their activity. Branches were established speedily in all the large centres of population, and all who felt a special interest in the question had their names enrolled upon the register of one, or both, of these two bodies. The Federationists found valuable allies in the fair, for there were many ladies high in rank and influence who willingly allowed their names to be inscribed upon the Britannia Roll which had been specially inaugurated to enlist their aid. If John Bull typified the sturdy manhood and incarnate common sense which had so much assisted in the birth of Oceana, Britannia typified the gentler virtues which distinguished it.

“ She alone knew, of victors first and best,
To fold the vanquished to her pardoning breast :
To gather 'neath her wings, in one great brood,
The tribes of Man, by might, then love, subdued,
Mother, not Queen, calling those sons by birth
Whom she had conquered—linking ends of Earth.”

And worthily Britannia's daughters carried out their task. They gracefully dispensed the hospitalities of the old country to the visitors who hailed from every part of Greater Britain. They distributed the leaflets of the League, and, by the gentle suasion which, in many ways, they knew so well how best to exercise, they influenced enormous

numbers to espouse the cause. And, knowing that the hand which rocked "the cradle" ruled "the world," they trained their children from their earliest years to love their broad imperial heritage, and not disgrace their ancestry by making it away. "The cause was that of an Empire of liberty extending into every quarter of the globe, and the responsibility was to hand it down to their descendants with all its ancient and beneficent institutions unimpaired and inviolate." And they realized it to the full.

And the meetings of the League, which rapidly began to rank amongst the most popular of public gatherings, owed much to their co-operation. These gatherings differed widely from the ordinary style of public meeting, and, by the various attractions of their programmes, drew tremendous audiences whom speeches pure and simple would have scared away. In the United Kingdom, orators from every part of Oceana were employed to emphasize its unity, and in all the Colonies enthusiastic English tongues proclaimed the glory of the new idea. But the meetings were not by any means confined to speeches. They were interspersed with patriotic songs, and on every platform in the Em-

pire might be heard the stirring strains of "Rule Britannia," the music of "Killarney," or the plaintive notes of "Auld Lang Syne." From many a crowded throng in far Australia rolled up to heaven the stirring words :

" For a glorious charter, deny it who can,
Is breathed in the words ' I'm an Englishman ;'"

and throughout the Great Dominion, like a trumpet-call,

" the signal ran,
' England expects that every man
This day will do his duty.' "

" The Minstrel Boy " would perhaps be followed by the martial strains of " Scots, Wha Hae," and " Men of Harlech " by " The British Grenadiers." " The Midshipmite," " The Mariners of England," and " England, dear England, the Queen of the World " were all in great request ; some sweet Canadian boat song would be coupled with the airs in vogue beneath the splendours of the Southern Cross ; and " Songs of Empire " would be heard, in every corner of it, side by side with songs from corners untold miles away. But the favourite song of all was this :

" Sharers of our glorious past,
Brothers, must we part at last ?

Shall we not thro' good and ill
Cleave to one another still ?
Britain's myriad voices call,
' Sons, be welded each and all,
Into one imperial whole,
One with Britain, heart and soul !
One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne ! '
Britons, hold your own ! "

And always, whilst the surging multitudes arose and bared their heads, the closing song would be, " God Save the Queen." How John Bull's heart was touched, as, like the music of some mighty sea, these airs, endeared to him by such sublime associations, would float at once from perhaps ten thousand voices, and in every eye he saw the fires of patriotism flash ; and how, in every zone, some gray-haired man would feel in all his feeble veins new vigour as he heard again the unaccustomed songs of home ; and how his children would declare, with faces moved to strange excitement, that, come what might, they were resolved to cleave to that far " isle that " knew " not her own greatness," but had given them theirs, and put into their veins the rich red blood which could not brook humiliation, and had never throbbed in any pulses save the pulses of the free.

Sometimes the meetings would be varied by great lantern views of beautiful colonial scenery—the heights above Quebec, the ships and shores of Sydney Harbour, the glittering plains of India, the mist upon the Table Mountain, the sugar-fields of far Jamaica, or the surges thundering around some sweet Pacific archipelago. And, in the Colonies, the youngest child began to recognize and love “the stately homes of England,” to marvel at the mysteries of Stonehenge, to reverently call to mind the monuments of Westminster, or climb, in thought, the misty crest of Snowdon, or cross the placid waters of sweet Windermere, or view the sylvan loveliness of “Ellen’s Isle,” or, from the towering heights of Carran-tual, gaze dreamily upon the distant bosom of Lough Leane.

Sometimes historic scenes would be produced upon the canvas, and the chivalry of England influence the heart of Oceana, or the prowess of colonial pioneers awake the emulation of the sons and daughters of the Mother Country. These scenes would be accompanied by recitations—“Boadicea,” “The Bard,” “The Armada,” “The Burial of Sir John Moore,” “The Charge of the Light Brigade,”

“The Wreck of the Birkenhead,” and others which recounted noble deeds by Oceana’s children in all ages and in every clime, and served to keep alive in all the best traditions of the race. And, when the Imperial Institute was opened, it became the focus of a hundred enterprizes, each designed to draw the various branches of the Empire closer to “the heart of oak” from whence they drew their vigour, and derived the life which showed such signs of proud development. The Institute was, in itself, a permanent reminder of the grandeur of the Briton’s birthright, and the lesson was effectually enforced in every Colony by the loans it freely made of its possessions to the local Museums and Art Galleries. In all the schools the history of England meant the history of Oceana, and all geography was made subservient to the fullest knowledge of her vast resources, and her unexampled area.

Even in the matter of religious services the new-born spirit showed itself, and to the many beautiful petitions in the Book of Common Prayer was added this, from the lips of “blind John Milton,” clearer-sighted than he had been generally deemed: “Thou Who of Thy free grace didst build up this Brittannick Empire to a glorious

and enviable heighth, with all her Daughter Ilands about her, stay us in this felicitie."

A propaganda pushed with such consummate skill, and rooted in a sentiment so strong as love of race, could scarcely fail to have due influence. The League found allies everywhere. A thousand ready scribes in press and pamphlet pushed the new idea, and endeavoured to assist in shaping it. And parliamentary candidates were heckled so persistently upon the question that they simply *had* to give it their attention if they hoped to have the slightest chance of victory. It was not any longer needful to swear adhesion to the multitudinous items in a new "Variety Programme ;" but the man who would not promise to promote the closer union of the various parts of Oceana might as well begin to "cultivate his own fireside" at once, in company with that great personality who was "principally remarkable for his disinterested aversion to the British Empire." Sandy had, like John, been drawn to the idea immediately. Taffy half forgot his tithes in thinking of the possibilities the scheme unfolded ; whilst even Pat began to look on it with sympathy as soon as he perceived that under it, it might be possible for him to

have a National Council. And, presently, they all united in promoting the "consummation" so "devoutly to be wish'd."

Abroad, at first, the progress of the idea was comparatively slow. One wicked colonial wit had pictured the "dear old Mother Country," in her zeal for Federation, as a spider, seeking to entangle Australia in the web of her greed for personal aggrandizement. But the bulk of the citizens of Oceana were very fond of John, for did not his blood run in their veins, and had he not brought them up, and were they not heirs to his immense estate, and might they not be equal partners in his world-wide business? For, if they left their father, they would lose their interest in all his great possessions, and would be absolutely severed from each other too. And the wisest of them lifted up their voices to convince their countrymen that "union was strength," and division weakness; and that self-interest, as well as sentiment; and that their duty to themselves, as well as their gratitude to John, demanded it; and a feeling leapt to life in the breath of which all meaner motives passed away. In the little isle "set in the silver sea," and in almost every land in which the immemorial

banner floated, there were multitudes to whom the Federation of the Empire had become the watchword of the hour, and, and as soon as John, in consequence of the teaching of the United Empire League, began to manifest a wish to meet their views in reference to the furtherance of mutual trade relations, and to abandon, to some extent, his old and stupid attitude upon the subject of Free Trade, the minority, who cared absolutely nothing for sentiment, and only clung to John for what they could get out of him, became as ardent advocates of federation as were their more romantic brethren who believed in brotherhood, and would have died for the honour of the flag.

And as suddenly as Australasia had decided to ignore her petty jealousies, and submit to sundry sacrifices for the sake of the common wealth, the common strength, the common glory, Oceana laid her little feuds and trivial internecine difficulties by, and prepared to put the project into practice.

And, at last, the Conference was called. Just as the foremost statesmen in Australasia had met in Sydney to pass their memorable resolutions, and to frame a Bill for the constitution of an

Australasian Commonwealth, so the statesmen of the whole of Oceana—the sagest heads in Canada, the wisest minds beheath the Southern Cross, the empire-builders from the Cape, the tawny counsellors from the banks of the Ganges, with others from a score of less important climes — assembled in the old metropolis ; and, in the shadow of Westminster, amid the memories of two thousand years, and in the cradle of the race that was about to dominate the world, they met the wisest men in the United Kingdom, while three hundred million souls looked on with sympathy. And the Emperors of Europe knew that, if the Conference succeeded, they might put their swords into their sheaths, as far, at any rate, as Oceana was concerned ; for, if her statesmen should succeed in setting up the *Kriegsverein* which was the primary object of their scheme, the mighty realm they represented would become invincible.

But, enormous as the growth of public sentiment had been, the Empire was not ripe, as yet, for the fuller federation which appeared to John to logically follow from the new idea. For the Federation of the Kingdom had not been completed when the Federation of the Empire, in its

first and skeleton form, was undertaken, and, very sensibly, the scheme the League proposed was of a comparatively unambitious nature, and simply meant to lend itself, apart from any reconstruction of existing institutions, to the immediate exigencies of the case.

Its essential features were as follows : To appoint a sort of special Cabinet, or Council, consisting of the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, the Colonial Secretary, the Indian Secretary, the Secretary for War, the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, ¹ together with duly accredited representatives of the three groups of self-governing Colonies. To endow this new Imperial Cabinet with power to act in all foreign affairs, and to combine the naval and military resources of the Empire for the purposes of common defence. This implied, of course, that the Colonies should contribute to the necessary naval and military outlay, and it had been originally proposed that such of them as were represented in the Imperial Cabinet should raise its quota in the way its Parliament preferred, and that the

¹ It would, I think, be well to add to these the President of the Board of Trade, and perhaps the Post-Master General.

contributions of the various Crown Colonies should be determined by the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

But this appeared to not a few to be rather a clumsy way out of the difficulty, and here the United Empire Trade League stepped in with a suggestion which was promptly taken. They had found the Free Trade fetish so enshrined in England that they had begun to despair of making any headway on the lines they had at first pursued. Protection in the ordinary sense appeared to be impossible, at any rate as yet ; and so they called to mind the famous adage of Will Shakespeare :

“ What's in a name ? that which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet,”

and set themselves to gain their object by a somewhat different mode. It was to ask each port in Oceana to impose a small uniform duty of so much per cent. upon all the goods which came to it from foreign nations, and to apply the proceeds to the maintenance of an Imperial Army and Navy, and the cost of the Consular and Diplomatic Service. Nobody could accurately say that this was Protection, but it answered just as well.

It meant that every Colony possessed, in its dealings with every other Colony, and especially in its dealings with John, and Sandy, and Taffy, and Pat, a distinct advantage over all its foreign rivals. It gave to each a corresponding privilege in dealing with the other Colonies, and the trade of all developed so considerably in consequence that they were more than compensated for the extra price they had to pay for the diminishing quantity of goods which they found it needful to procure from other realms. The funds resulting from the imposition of these duties was sufficient to maintain, upon a vastly better footing, a naval and military organization for mutual defence, with special squadrons and divisions for the separate use of every portion of the Empire, but all acknowledging the supreme authority of the Imperial Cabinet, and acting under its direction in time of war ; and still to so relieve the burden of the tax-payers of the United Kingdom, who had previously been called upon to bear the weight of it almost alone, as to enable the Ministry to free the country from the farce of levying import duties on its tea, and its coffee, and its cocoa, and its fruit, and

still pretending to despise the process known as "taxing the food of the people." In addition to creating a United Army and Navy, and drawing the various parts of Oceana nearer by conceding their request for preferential treatment in regard to their commercial dealings, it satisfied the qualms of John by giving him a boon which he had vainly sighed for from the chosen champions of Free Trade—the boon of "a free breakfast table."

Simultaneously with this arrangement, the Treaties which had tied the hands of all John's children, and prevented them from favouring him at the expense of his competitors, however much they might have wished to do so, were rather tardily cancelled; and some of his descendants now began to give to him much greater advantages over his rivals than the advantages which were involved in the imposition of the Defensive Dues. One or two, at first, declined to fall in with the new arrangement, and forfeited the differential treatment which the Dues afforded to the rest; but they found that their conduct placed them at such an obvious disadvantage that they were not long in coming to their senses.

This scheme was carried into operation in the

earlier period of Lord Salisbury's third Ministry, and, upon the whole, it worked with marked success. But many felt that an Imperial Cabinet alone was not sufficient. The system laid a dangerous responsibility upon a dozen individuals who, however wise and patriotic they might be, were apt, at times, to "take too much upon" themselves. It was as if Taffy, and Sandy, and Pat had been governed by a Cabinet in which they were each represented, whilst John alone had members in the House of Commons; or as if a clique of eminent Canadians had controlled the whole affairs of the Dominion, whilst representatives from only one of the Canadian provinces had been allowed to meet at Ottawa. It smacked too much of a benevolent several-headed autocracy, belied true democratic principles, and lacked the moral influence which came from immediate parliamentary support. Moreover, India had not any representative in it, and all the lesser Colonies were in the same position. To John, at any rate, the scheme was unsymmetrical, and he felt that the Imperial Cabinet would never stand upon a proper footing, and act with due authority, until it was able to claim that authority directly from an Imperial Parliament.

And everything which followed naturally led to this, as John had all along intended. The hubbub which had raged around the portals of the "Gilded Chamber," though it had not scared their lordships into passing schemes in which they did not honestly believe, and which the nation had not had the chance of ratifying, had set them all a-thinking. The "Markiss," as already mentioned, had, some years before, attempted a reform, and, now that he was back again in power, with a good majority behind him, he determined to take up the task again. Both he and his party had begun to see that it was well to move spontaneously, and not await the kick which sometimes made them move, however much against their will. The "Gilded Chamber" had emerged from an unparalleled ordeal with dignity and safety, and now, if ever, was the time to place it on a footing which was logical, and take the venom from the taunts of its opponents by initiating and accomplishing an adequate reform.

It really seemed to John himself that the time had come when it must be either "mended or ended," and, although he was very proud of it, with all its faults, he was

not slow to perceive that it was somewhat out of harmony with the spirit of the times. In the ancient days it had filled its functions nobly, and to the peers of England John ascribed his earlier liberties. Even now, it often had to make a stand against new-fangled principles that were fatal to the very rudiments of freedom. In its conception of the grandeur of Oceana, and the dignity and the duty of maintaining it, as well as in its manners and its business capabilities, it was immeasurably superior to the assembly which was wont to rail at it. And I question if, in its morals, which were supposed to be very bad, it did not equally outshine its more popular, but less efficient, rival. As to its Conservatism, people seemed to forget that it was just because it was Conservative that it was of any use at all; and that a Radical Upper Chamber would have been a farce. The very object of its existence was to prevent too rapid progress, and, if it had not been Conservative, it would have been superfluous. And the curious part of the matter was that, although Radicals were added to its roll continually, the bulk of them no sooner passed its portals than they cast their Radical proclivities aside. The "years

which bring the philosophic mind " had much to answer for, and Time appeared to be distinctly on the side of " our old nobility."

However, the constitution of the House was certainly anomalous, and, though few were found to vote for its extinction, for the Englishman "dearly loves a lord," there were many who were anxious for its reform. The mere fact that a man was the son of his father did appear to be a somewhat insufficient qualification for a seat within the sacred precincts; and, whilst it was recognized that property, and intellect, and learning might fitly fill its benches, it was no doubt desirable that they should contrive to get there in a manner somewhat more compatible with modern notions. A certain number of the peers of Scotland and of Ireland were elected by their fellow-peers to represent them, and so the *crème de la crème* of either realm was authorized to speak on its behalf. As long as the hereditary principle was maintained at all, this was clearly the better way in which to give effect to it, and, with the approval of all parties, the principle was extended to England.

Thus all the Hereditary Peers who sat in the House of Lords were chosen by their fellow-

peers on account of their special fitness for the post ; whilst some proposed that they should be elected, not by the majority of the members of their own order, but by the majority of their countrymen, an idea, indeed, which was rapidly becoming popular. The Bishops and the Law Lords were retained, and the representative nature of the assembly was further strengthened by an Act which provided for the creation of a limited number of Life Peers, selected by reason of some special service to the State, whether in the domain of politics, or science, or literature, or art, or religion, or philosophy, or commerce, or war. The "Gilded Chamber" thus became the mirror of everything that was best in the life of England ; enlightened by a genuine spirit of liberty, informed by a reasonable reverence for the past, and lifted out of the petty feuds and jealousies which still, alas, continued to fester in the House of Commons. And it won "golden opinions from all sorts of people." And the clamour which had surged against its timeworn portals gradually died away.

The happiest feature in its amended constitution was the introduction of *Colonial Life Peers*.

Some had, at first, demurred to this new notion, though nearly all agreed that it was in every way desirable that the opinion of the Colonies should be more frequently consulted; and that the Cabinet should be able to look for advice, in times of difficulty, to men familiar with the circumstances of the states from whence they hailed.

Everything considered, the creation of Colonial Life Peers appeared to be the simplest and most effective preliminary step towards the solution of the difficulty. Some had declared that the Colonists were so essentially democratic that they did not desire "to see such high dignities naturalised among themselves, even in the most diluted form;" that it would be difficult to find men "for such a purpose, in whom" they "would place continuous confidence;" and that, "being absent," the men appointed "would lose touch of popular feeling." It appeared to John, however, that a Life Peer raised to the House of Lords, not because he was the son of his father, but solely on account of ability, reputation, and personal merit, would be the possessor of a privilege which even a democracy need not despise; and that, if the Life Peers were selected on these

grounds alone, without any reference to considerations of party politics, the two first of the above objections would be effectually dispelled. And, as to the third, it did not follow that, because a man was raised to a Colonial Life Peerage, he would be doomed to perpetual exile. In these days of increasingly rapid communication, he might frequently revisit his native state ; the telegraph, like a great nerve, would keep him in constant touch with it ; and the time might come when he would be able to talk to his constituents through the telephone, and even see their forms reflected on "the disk" which some had spoken of as one of the possibilities of the future.

As to the objection that "¹ the number of persons combining the necessary qualifications could be counted on the fingers of one hand," John was of opinion that his children were altogether too modest. He was certain they had scores of men who were qualified for such a post, and who would be proud, and even eager, to fill it.

And so he put the matter to the test. And, as

1 For a fuller statement of these various objections see Mr. Frode's "Oceana."

he expected, there was not an honour which the Queen was able to confer which was so greatly coveted as this. And the fame of the august assemblage, with its high traditions and its noble lineage, was so increased by the admission to its councils of the sagest heads and soundest hearts in Oceana, that few were found to question its authority, or doubt its fitness for the elevated place it had to fill. It was the link which united the expanded England of an epoch large with all imaginable promise to the little England rich in knightly deeds, and proud as if with premonitions of its prime. In an age which might have grown material, it kept alive the spirit of romance, the recollection of immortal names, the love of chivalry ; and, whenever John showed signs of sitting down among his moneybags, forgetful of the larger aims, it brought him to his senses, and besought him to recall the past.

The House of Lords had thus become an admirable Imperial Second Chamber, and, with the delegation to the National Councils sitting annually in London, and Edinburgh, and Dublin, and Carnarvon, of the power to manage purely national affairs, the way was cleared for the

immediate creation of an Imperial House of Commons.

In carrying out his own domestic policy upon the lines described at length in the preceding chapter, and in the story of the "mending" of the House of Lords, John Bull had come to the very threshold of the fulfilment of the grandest part of his idea, and had come by steps so natural and logical that he could scarcely realize himself how far he had advanced towards the goal. John was exceedingly proud of the Popular Assembly. It was associated with a thousand stirring memories ; it had undergone the storms of the centuries in safety, and issued from them with increased renown ; it had become a part of the very life of the nation, the pride of England and the envy of the world. And though, of recent years, the sacrilegious hands of some of those who sat in it had robbed it of its former fame ; though unseemly struggles had been witnessed from its benches, and disgraceful phrases bandied to and fro across its floors, it was still "the Mother of Parliaments." None could blot from his remembrance the great traditions of its past, and not all the ribaldry of the degenerate herd who treated "the Mother of

Parliaments" as a menagerie sufficed to make John Bull loose faith in it, or seek to rob it of a single leaf of the laurels it had won by centuries of splendid service.

To even think of asking it to *abnegate* its imperial functions in favour of some bran-new body made to order, as the fussier sort of John's advisers had proposed, in his opinion, savoured of "rank blasphemy." It was quite another thing than asking the House to *delegate* a portion of its lesser functions to local bodies. This it had done repeatedly already. It did so when it granted local self-government to Canada. It did so when it gave Parliaments to the provinces of Australasia, and when it crowned the deed by the concession of a Commonwealth. It did so when it sanctioned the establishment, in the United Kingdom, of Parish, and Town, and District, and County, and National Councils. But it merely delegated : it did not abnegate. Any of the functions which it had conceded it was at liberty to resume. And any of the acts of its subordinate Parliaments it had power to disallow. When Newfoundland had displayed a wish to laugh at its decrees, at once the voice of its Ministers made it manifest that its supremacy was unim-

paired. No province could repudiate its mandate. If Ireland flouted Italy, the Parliament of London—unlike the Parliament at Washington—was quite incapable of pleading impotence as an excuse for inaction. In theory and in fact it was supreme.

And so it must remain. This was at the root of all John's policy. He would never have conceded local government to Taffy, to Sandy, or to Pat, if this had meant the sacrifice of any of its old prerogatives. But he had felt, from the first, that its supremacy would not continue long if Pat had been excluded from his councils. And, at the very root of his objections to the "dead" and buried Bill of Mr. Gladstone, was the circumstance that, in it, he had sought to shut the door upon the Irish Members, and had failed to stipulate with sufficient preciseness for the continuance of an authority which, in their absence, John was confident, could only prove a rope of sand. It was quite true that, in the case of Pat, this meant, as I have previously observed, that taxation would have been divorced from representation ; but the same was true of Oceana to a less extent. She was only represented indirectly. One Minister in the Imperial Cabinet, and perhaps

a score of peers who sat within the "Gilded Chamber," was not an adequate expression of the fluctuating wishes of a mighty democratic state like Canada, or Australasia. And, as the Empire's products multiplied, and gradually made it self-sufficing, the Defensive Dues would probably diminish, and it might be needful to impose Imperial Taxes in their stead.

In fact, it was plain to John that, if he wished his ancient Parliament to maintain its immemorial powers and dignities, he must open its portals to the representatives of Oceana. And, if he wished her citizens to bear in perpetuity their full proportion of his burdens, he must recognize their right to an adequate share in his councils.

Moreover, John had a violent dislike to violent measures. Democrat as he was, he was distinctly Conservative in his sympathies. He wished to move slowly and carefully, and to be quite sure that he was not moving backwards. He was a reformer—not a destroyer. He did not believe in revolution, but in evolution. And therein lay his strength. His "freedom" slowly

“broadened down from precedent to precedent,”
and even his throne was

“Broad-based upon the people’s will,
And compass’d by the inviolate sea.”

Whilst France was vainly fuming after liberty under a Republic, he was enjoying it under a Monarchy. And, although he was himself a Republican at heart, he somehow clung to the “Queen and Constitution.”

Any measure, therefore, which could be grafted on to the Constitution, or was a natural growth therefrom, at once attracted him. And he would have been as greatly scandalized at the thought of dispensing with the Imperial Parliament as he was at the thought of closing its doors to the voluble gentry from across the Channel.

But, thanks to his idea, the policy which he had systematically followed since the dawn of it had rendered such a course unnecessary. He did not need to constitute a new assembly, specially designed to meet the new conditions. It was not requisite to make a Parliament to order, as various constitution-mongers wished, or to apply the methods of the jerry-builder to the execution of

the project of "the architects of Fate." He did not want a Parliament without a history, without prestige, and without traditions ; which could not claim a tithe of the respect and the authority attaching to the venerable institution whose prerogatives it must infallibly usurp. The germ of an Imperial Parliament in all its fulness was already in existence. Imperial Peers adorned the deliberations of the older branch of it already. And nothing now remained but to ask it to delegate to the National Councils of the still United Kingdom, and to some of the less privileged of the Colonial Parliaments, a few additional duties, and to receive within its walls the representatives of every part of Oceana.

And there was not anything startling in this. It was a policy which might have saved the bloody split between John Bull and Brother Jonathan, in a preceding century, and kept Old England one with New until the termination of "the course of time." And it was a policy which other realms had tried already. To take a couple of illustrations only—the Colonists of France were admitted to the Chamber of Deputies ; and every one of the United States

possessed the privilege of sending representatives to Washington, and every nationality beneath "the Stars and Stripes" could help to mould "the Great Republic's" destiny.

All this was pretty clear. The principle was admitted, and the only question was as to the mode of its application.

First, it was decided, in accordance with John's strong dislike of needless change, that the present maximum number of Members of the House of Commons should not be altered. The number was six hundred and seventy. Allowing for the increase of population which had taken place whilst the various changes previously described were in progress, this gave one member to every seventy thousand of the population. And it was a proportion which everybody seemed to think might reasonably be increased. We are told that in "the multitude of counsellors there is safety," but the proverb is not of universal application; and John was of opinion that, if, on several occasions, the Members of the House of Commons had been less in number, they might have acted with quite as much discretion. For most of them wanted to talk, and not many of them had

anything to say which was worth the listening. And, among them, they contrived to waste a large amount of time which they ought to have devoted to their beds or to their business. Moreover, the proportion was small by comparison with that of several other countries, and Brother Jonathan considered his children adequately represented with constituencies twice as large. And a change in this direction had been on the carpets years before—so long ago, indeed, as the occasion of the passing of the County Franchise Bill.

It was therefore decided to retain six hundred and seventy as the maximum ; to set seventy of these aside for India and the Crown Colonies ; and to allot the remaining six hundred seats, in due proportion, to the United Kingdom ; to the Dominion of Canada ; to the Commonwealth of Australasia ; to all the self-governing Colonies in the new South African Confederation (which embraced the Orange Free State and the Transvaal) ; to the West Indian Islands ; and to the various smaller Colonies on whom full powers of local self-government had been conferred. Among the rest, the Isle of Man obtained a Member, and the Channel Isles

were not less fortunate. Population was the basis, and, except in isolated cases such as these, it was rigidly observed. As previously explained, Pat had not any longer twenty Members more than he was honestly entitled to, and, of course, he had not any less. And, contrary to the opinions of some of his patrons, he was quite equal to supplying the necessary quota for both assemblies. He had more brains than the "G.O.M." had given him credit for.

And Oceana was richer in both wealth, and intellect, and leisure than her children had imagined ; for she also found with ease sufficient patriots to meet in her Provincial Assemblies, and her Central Parliaments, and in the mighty Parliament which met in London too. Indeed, the supply was considerably in excess of the demand, and every "village Hampden" dreamed of one day standing on the floors of Westminster.

The representatives of each of the self-governing states were chosen in the manner each preferred, but always on a very liberal franchise. Some of them even sent Women Members ; but the better-looking of the sex preferred to attend to their sweethearts, their husbands, and their

families, and the innovation was not popular. The rose is loveliest in the garden, and the flower of womanhood grows best in the refining airs of home.

The seventy representatives of India, and "Darkest Africa," and Borneo, and Burmah, and the rest were nominated by the various local governments ; and it was not proposed to place them on an equal footing with the other races until they were one in intellect, in enterprize, and in sympathy with their white brothers, whose ambition it had lately been, instead of killing them with Maxim guns and British whisky, to raise their morals and improve their education.

And so it came about that all the different parts of Oceana had a voice in the shaping of her fate. They helped to bear the common burden, and they shared in the common glory. And the power of the Imperial Parliament was undiminished. Over every portion of the Empire it was lord, for every portion of the Empire had a voice in it. In theory, all minor Parliaments and Councils were its humble servants only. It could refuse to ratify their laws, and it could pass laws over-riding

them. Nay, it could blot the Councils from existence, if the need arose. But, well-nigh without an exception, they kept within their proper sphere, and exercised their functions wisely. And, in practice, the duties of the Imperial Parliament were limited to things outside the scope of any merely local power. Whatever appertained to peace or war ; whatever touched the Empire's dealings with outlying states ; all things of international importance ; the regulation of the imperial tolls, the development of the imperial trade, and the harmonizing of the interests of all the various federated states--these were matters which were in the hands of the imperial statesmen who were all as one in working for the Commonwealth of Oceana.

Before this consummation came, in many of the Colonies the principles of local self-government had been as liberally applied as in the Mother Country. Throughout the states of Australasia, every district, every town, and every village of sufficient size, possessed a Council of its own. The same was true of Canada, and of all the larger English-speaking Colonies. Every community, however small, with com-

mon interests, was permitted to combine for their protection, and to unite with any other community in any matter of mutual concern. In India and all the Crown Colonies, the internal system of administration was arranged, as far as possible, upon a similar basis. The only vital difference was that, in the self-governing states, the members of the various Councils were elected, generally upon the basis of manhood suffrage ; whilst, in the states which needed government of a more paternal kind, they were either nominated by the central authorities, or elected by a special franchise, in accordance with the needs of each particular locality. And, of course, as knowledge spread, and civilization, step by step, advanced, the liberties of every race were cautiously extended, and the people's voice endowed with constitutional methods of expression.

The ultimate effect of all this was that the whole of the United Empire had been federated on the lines adopted in the case of the United Kingdom, and possessed the requisite machinery for the extension of the reasonable Socialism which increasingly prevailed at home.

Exactly as the Town, and Village, and County Councils had, one by one, acquired their several industries, and worked them for the common good, exchanging what they had to spare with the neighbouring towns, and villages, and counties; and exactly as the four adjacent countries organized among themselves a larger interchange, so the towns, and villages, and districts, and counties, and provinces, and states of Oceana interchanged their various goods in turn. John still maintained, in many things, his manufacturing supremacy. He sent to all his children the superior products of his furnaces and looms; but, as he could not grow enough to feed himself, in spite of the immense improvement which had taken place in farming, his daughter, Canada, supplied him with illimitable bags of wheat, whilst Australasia sent him admirable mutton, and Africa and India a hundred luxuries peculiar to their respective climes. Each found in all the others a sufficient market, and each could buy from them sufficient for its daily needs. The strife of Capital and Labour lessened every year, for every man who was prepared to work a reasonable time obtained an

adequate remuneration, and the common weal became the common policy. There was "no complaining in our streets." A legal eight hours limit had been rendered quite superfluous, for it was found, when labour had been fully organized, and all began to do their share, that less than six sufficed. And every man had leisure to improve his mind, and exercise his body; and, instead of drudging out their "three score years and ten" with stunted forms, and shoulders prematurely bent, and brains as blunted as they were diminutive, the sons of Oceana lived to be at least a hundred, and enjoyed a hale old age, uplifted by the spell of art and music, and consoled by all the tender charms of literature, and saw their children springing up around them beautiful in feature, strong "in form," and "infinite in faculty"—

"The fair beginners of a nobler time."

And, over all the length and breadth of that great realm there abode a "happy and lovely folk, who had cast away riches and attained to wealth."

And in the higher life whose origin was earth, whose object heaven, an equal change had come. In every Colony, the Protestant churches followed

England's lead and federated, and in each the outcome was a Church so broad in its beliefs, and so inviting in its services, that it drew all men unto it.

The task had been less difficult in the remoter portions of Oceana than in the heart thereof. In some of them the Methodists were one already, and in all of them the various denominations stood upon an equal footing ; whilst their differences were not accentuated, as they were at home, by social jealousies, and the recollection of historic wrongs. Their federation in pursuit of common objects led them, everywhere, to drop their minor differences, and seek to find a common creed. And they found it on the lines adopted by the Church of England, reformed so thoroughly, at last, that all men loved her, and desired no sweeter social influence, and no saner spiritual guide ; and, ultimately, all the great colonial churches federated with the Church which dated to the time of Ethelbert, and had many a beautiful cathedral older than the coming of the Norman King.

And so the Church of England broadened out into the Church of Oceana. Attacked by that, the citadels of Heathendom on every hand began

to totter to their fall. But from the wreck full many a gentle precept was preserved, and, though the fanes of India no longer teemed with grinning gods and reeked with hideous ceremonies, the teachings of Gautama were enshrined in the temples of a nobler faith; and many a beautiful survival of the vanished rites of races feeling through the darkness for "the Unknown God" had been embalmed by those who followed Him with clearer vision, and added to the ritual of that great Church in whose broad bosom more than half the sons of men had found that inward peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

CHAPTER VI.

“THE FEDERATION OF THE WORLD.”

The end was just what everybody had expected. Shut out from the markets of the United Empire, the United States began to feel the pinch of poverty. Of what avail was Brother Jonathan's immense producing power if he had lost his customers? And he was not very long in realizing, to his cost, that John Bull and his family had been the biggest and the best of them. Nor could he any longer swamp the rising industries of Canada; and, as for that fair damsel, she was quite indifferent to the fact that he still obstinately closed his doors to her. The wheat with which her virgin harvest-fields were white—the flocks and herds that fattened on her boundless pasture-lands—were wanted, now, to satisfy the growing needs of John; and, in return, her thriving population bought from him the wares which, in his mills and workshops, he could manufacture better and more cheaply than the cleverest of his competitors. She was not

tempted, as she had been in the time of her distress, to sacrifice her ancient loyalty, and humbly ask to be admitted into partnership with Jonathan ; and that cute and pushing individual began to feel that he had somewhat over-reached himself. And all the hardships which his selfishness had previously imposed upon his gallant neighbour he was, at last, experiencing himself. A clever pencil had portrayed him with a mighty magnet in his hand—the magnet forged by one, M'Kinley—and Canada, in spite of all the efforts of her patriotic counsellors to hold her back, was represented as unable to resist the magnet's influence, and yielding, quite against her better inclinations, to the force of its insidious power.

And this would probably have happened had the magnet acted as its patentee designed. But, like the monster made by Frankenstein, it injured its originators most. If it operated as a magnet on poor Canada, it acted as a thumb-screw on Jonathan. And it tortured him so much that he gradually relaxed the pressure, and so, to some extent, relieved himself and her.

But, in the meantime, John had been engaged

in patenting a magnet of his own. It was the magnet of the new Defensive Dues. Any trifling inconvenience which it might have possibly inflicted on himself and on his family was more than counterbalanced by its numerous advantages. Its influence upon the Colonies has been described already. But it did not only serve to draw the different parts of Oceana into closer union with the Mother Country. It began to operate in this direction on all the other realms as well. And Brother Jonathan appeared to feel it most. For it was far more powerful and immeasurably larger than his own, and the strength of the attraction was at once reversed. And Jonathan had ceased to act towards Canada in the old offensive fashion. He was not any more the hoity-toity suitor, conscious of his wealth, and playing on the damsel's poverty. He was hopelessly enamoured of her now, and would have gone down upon his knees to gain her smile.

And he found his trade declining so enormously, at last, that he humbly went to John, and asked if he might deal again with her, providing that he would, in future, deal with John and all the other members of the family on equal terms. And, sup-

pressing a smile, for he had seen, all along, that it would ultimately come to this, the old man said that, as a staunch Free Trader, he should be very glad to let him do so. And Canada and her admirer soon made friends again. And he fell in love with her more desperately than ever. For she was indeed deserving of any man's love, and to marry her would mean admission to the oldest and the best-connected family in the world.

There was not one of John Bull's children who would have married against his will, and Canada the least of all. But when, instead of asking her to join him in a runaway match, Jonathan, who was a very good fellow in the main, though a little worldly-minded, came manfully forward, and offered his hand and heart quite openly, and said that he was willing to return to the bosom of the family ; that he would love and cherish John Bull's oldest daughter, and add his own resources and his splendid fortune—splendid still, in spite of all his recent losses—to the maiden's dowry on the day of union, and enter into partnership with the famous firm with world-wide connections and a universal trade—the ancient and successful firm, John Bull & Co.—why, Canada accepted

his proposal straight away, for she had admired him all along, in spite of his conceit and selfishness. And, when papa's consent was asked, he gave it without a word of hesitation, and took the fist of Brother Jonathan, and shook it till that gentleman began to "guess and calculate" that the old man had muscles like Atlantic cables, and hands as strong and sinewy as the hands of Fate. And he marvelled much to find him still so hale and hearty, in spite of his great age, and all the worries which he must have had in bringing up so large a family.

The immediate effect of the union was that Jonathan repealed the duties he had levied on the goods of John and his household ; that he and Canada entered into the closest possible relations ; that he developed an enormous trade with his relatives, Australasia, India, and Africa ; and that all the family developed an enormous trade with him.

Prior to the marriage, John had felt so conscious of his power that he had cast away all thoughts of war. The smaller nations wrangled still, and sometimes a sanguinary struggle would defile the plains of Europe, or the hot-blooded young

Republics of South America would fly at each other's throats ; but neither dared to think of falling out with him. In close alliance with his children he was safe, and India alone could furnish him with armies millions strong in case he needed them. His Fleet, which, in times past, had been counted equal to that of any two of his rivals, was equal, now, to all the other navies in the world combined ; and at any moment he could have called into the field a force so overwhelming that the mightiest of his competitors, even though they were able to summon all their sons to seize the sabre, and to follow where the trumpet called, and were welded into quintuple alliances, might have hesitated to fling down the gauntlet. And so greatly had the patriotic spirit grown that all his warriors were Volunteers. He had not any standing army, but every man within his borders would have buckled on his sword at Duty's bidding. "Holy Russia," who had laid her cruel hands on China, no longer dared to turn her envious eyes on India, and sought, instead, to stay the chronic famine gnawing at her heart, and to allay the fierce unrest which is the child of tyranny, and the deadly mother of assassination. John had not any grounds of

quarrel left in Europe. And though, in Africa, he had some powerful rivals, they were all afraid to lay their fingers on the land which he had civilized, and brought beneath the influence of his flag.

Free from the risk of war himself, he might have cast his armaments aside entirely had it not been for the fact that, by virtue of them, he became the arbiter of Europe's destinies. Long years before, when Johnny Crapaud and Johnny Schmoker had cherished sinister designs on Belgium, he had vowed that, if either ventured to assail that gallant little nation, he would instantly assist the other in the task of chastisement. But both had flinched from such a prospect, and resolved to keep the peace. When Germany, and Austria, and Italy had found themselves opposed to France and Russia, and the two had thirsted to assail the three, the thought that John, who had held aloof from any such alliance, and declared that "the greatest of British interests" was "peace," would probably throw in his lot against them had they rashly ventured to "let loose the dogs of war," had abundantly sufficed to "give" them "pause."

Once, it had been on the carpet for all the five to combine their forces, and to hurl them on his mighty Empire and divide the spoil ; but, remembering his immemorial valour, and cognizant of his augmented strength, they had let " I dare not wait upon I would." Had Brother Jonathan decided to throw in his lot with them, however, the herculean task would probably have been attempted ; but, in spite of the strain of foreign blood which had got into his veins, and notwithstanding all the soreness he had naturally felt when John began to fight him with his own weapons, there was enough of the old spirit in his composition to make him flout the base suggestion with disdain, and vow that, whatever quarrels he might have with John himself, he would never lift a finger to assist John's enemies. And, when the two made friends, and the forces who had fought so bravely underneath the Stars and Stripes were linked to those who had fought so splendidly beneath the Union Jack—when it was known that, in any future war, one flag would float above them all—united Europe hesitated to incur their anger, and all the petty realms that had delighted in John Bull's discomfiture, and lifted " their heads in the stillness to yelp at the English Flag," grew pale with terror if John

looked at them ; and, dreading lest their puny broils and wretched bickerings should call upon their heads the wrath of that great Guardian of the Peace, they had slowly ceased to strive among themselves, and patched up ancient quarrels, and allied themselves in order to ensure the common safety.

And, if they could not hope to wage a war of weapons against John Bull and his family with any prospect of success, to wage a war of tariffs was more hopeless still. Discovering the truth of this, and feeling the magnetic influence of the Customs Union of the Central European States, the whole of the outlying nations slowly gravitated into the charmed circle. And thus it came about, in course of time, that there was Free Trade throughout Europe, the British Isles alone excepted. Now, the effect of commercial union had nearly always been to lead to political union likewise, as Jonathan and John had plainly seen. Hence the M'Kinley Tariff, and the more effectual Defensive Dues. The Customs Union naturally ended in the federation of Germany, Italy, Austria, and one or two adjacent countries ; and the European Zollverein just as naturally culminated in the formation of the United States

of Europe, with Russia in Asia and China as Dependencies.

The same process had taken place in South America ; whilst, in spite of all his rivals there, John Bull had gained such a preponderating influence in Africa that the various nations into which the continent had been divided united for common protection underneath the Union Jack.

Thus, with lapse of time, the agitated continents had crystallized into three enormous federations, and each of these was grouped into a number of smaller federations. The United Empire of Great Britain (or the Commonwealth of Oceana, as it was now pretty generally called), the United States of Europe, and the United States of South America were the three great divisions ; but the United Empire included the United Kingdom, the United States of North America, the Commonwealth of Australasia, the United States of Hindustan, and the United States of Africa, and each of these was similarly sub-divided. The same remark applied to the United States of Europe and the United States of South America. Against each other all the three

presented an unbroken front. But, in all of them, the widest local liberty prevailed. John Bull especially had applied the federal doctrine to its fullest extent. Union for common purposes—liberty in matters of individual concern ; whatever degree of freedom was possible without interfering with the freedom of others—the idea was simple enough ; but it had led him, as he had expected, to a United Kingdom, a United Empire, a United Church, and a United People. He had applied it with remorseless logic, for it was absolutely logical ; and no principle which rests upon foundations such as these can fail to vindicate itself, and more than justify the dreams of its promoters. It is only when we build upon the sand that we are disappointed.

The growth of local liberty in Europe and in South America had taken similar lines, and, before the middle of the twentieth century, the two were organized internally with almost as much completeness as the mighty Commonwealth they copied.

And, as for Oceana, her power had now become so overwhelming that it was hopeless for either of her rivals, or even for the two combined, to

successfully oppose her on the land or on the sea ; and, great as their resources were, they found that there were many things produced within her borders—which extended over more than half the globe—that they could not successfully produce at home. But each, in like manner, produced a good many things which could not be produced by the other ; and so, to minimize their inconveniences, they each abandoned, as between themselves, their high protective tariffs, and there was Free Trade between Europe and South America, which led, of course, to their political amalgamation.

Still their commerce did not flourish. Still they were pinched and punished at every turn by the fact that they were debarred from trading with their mighty rival. And, although they struggled long, they did not make the slightest headway. It was vain for them "to kick against the pricks." And, one momentous day, they telephoned to John that they were weary of the struggle, and, with his consent, were quite prepared to join the English Zollverein.

John readily agreed, for, notwithstanding the amazing capabilities of his estate, he could not

conceal the fact that there were several articles which they could grow with greater ease than he. Moreover, he had perceived, from the first, that this would be the outcome of his policy. The principles which Bright and Cobden urged had always tickled his imagination; and, although he had learnt, to his cost, that other nations would not adopt them simply because they were wise and beautiful, he had never wavered in the faith that they were this and more; and had ultimately come to see that, in order to make sure of their acceptance, a seeming departure from them might be justified. And he had played his cards so well that the Free Trade throughout the World which had, somehow, failed to follow from his preaching had rapidly resulted from his practice within the borders of his own domain.

Need I say what followed? No longer jealous of each other's wealth, and unable to quarrel because, in the first place, one of them was vastly stronger than both the others, and, in the second, because they had not any longer anything to quarrel about, they asked to be allowed to join the Commonwealth.

The Zollverein was already an accomplished

fact, and the *Kriegsverein* was not any longer necessary. But they all sent representatives to the "Mother of Parliaments"; and, instead of the New Zealander coming to survey the ruins of St. Paul's, he came to sit within the walls of Westminster, and meet the Patagonian and the Eskimo, the Hottentot and the Celestial, and to join in their deliberations for the good of all. The function of government was no longer to trample on and fleece the poor, but to make them richer; no longer to pour tremendous armies into some adjacent state, but to war upon the wastes of Nature and to conquer them; no longer to send navies forth to batter down the walls of mighty cities, but to send out fleets to every port, in every ocean, bearing all the riches they required from zones less favoured, and taking back their own peculiar produce in return. Far-sighted men whom fools had scoffed at had, time out of mind, declared that the earth was capable of growing vastly more than all its hungry multitudes required, and, at last, the wisdom of their words was proved. The Local Councils, spreading like a network over every realm, had found an honest occupation in developing their different resources. The Village Councils supervised the cultivation of the

local soil, and saw to the feeding of the local flocks and herds. The Town Councils forged the iron, and shaped the steel, and wove the wool, and spun the cotton, and attended to the hundred other manufactures which the habits of the people rendered necessary. And both took care that every man who dwelt within their jurisdiction should possess a comfortable home, and fare like Dives instead of famishing like Lazarus. The District, National, and Continental Governments were occupied in regulating the relations of the various smaller bodies, and in harmonizing everywhere the law of supply and demand. And, in addition to providing for the satisfaction of the daily wants of all their citizens, they vied in the development of education, the extension of science, the advancement of literature, and the diffusion of the love of art. And all these peaceful functions of the world-wide Commonwealth "the Parliament of Man" controlled, its Cabinet the central eye—directed by the aggregated brain power of the nations, unobscured by any mist of party passion, and undistracted by the lurid spectacle of war.

And then, to crown the union of lands, and continents, and races, and the union of

the rich and poor in one great brotherhood, the whole of whom were born into the *common wealth*—that only real wealth—there came, at last, the union of the churches. The efforts of the Cardinal who, as previously described, had sought a basis for the fusion of the two main branches of the great Church Catholic, had only half succeeded till "the Federation of the World" had come. For the Roman Catholics were not confined to Oceana, and, although, within her borders, they had willingly combined, of recent years, with those who held a different creed in a variety of matters which were semi or entirely secular, it had been impossible for them to join the English Church without detaching themselves from all their brethren in the faith in all the other lands. And, whilst many had been won to it by virtue of its reasonable service and its lovely ritual, there were millions still who held the Pope as their religious Father, and St. Peter's as the shrine of Christendom. And, from motives of patriotism, if from no other, the Roman Catholics were loth to join a Church which they regarded as an alien. But, when the governments were all united, and they began to realize that, whether they were

white, or black, or red, or yellow, they were all God's children, and were all one family, they naturally felt that they might well be satisfied with one great Church. And so the Church of Rome agreed to join the Church of Oceana, on a basis mutually acceptable. The Greek Church, left apart, and recognizing how they overshadowed her, and seeing that the two were genuinely one, despite an elasticity of ritual which lent itself to the peculiarities of every place, was not very long in following the example of her Roman rival ; for each had long ago rejected dogmas which "the march of mind" had proved untenable ; and, as in the exalted Church which had become another magnet to attract them both, their creeds had each been purified in the furnace of Investigation, and winnowed by the fan of Knowledge, and rooted in the rock of Truth, and, like a "tree of life" whose "leaves" "were for the healing of the nations," the great Church Catholic arose in every land, to be a place of peace, and rest, and aspiration in the sunshine, and a never-failing covert from the storm.

The old world, which had so sadly stumbled "on its round of pain"—a mist of gold within its eyes, a stain of blood across its breast, a load of guilt upon its shoulders, and within its heart a rain of bitter tears—had seemed to drink of some *elixir vitæ*, and grow young again. The problems of its infancy were forgotten in the nobler problems of its prime, and, if its children wept at all, they wept, like Alexander, because they had not any other worlds to conquer. Happy in "the love of comrades," telling, as they sat beside their great Yule fires, or lay amid the fronded foliage, the strange and gruesome stories of the dreadful past, they spent their lives in making all about them beautiful. Their humblest industries were arts, their "common tasks" were sacraments, and in their veins "the ape and tiger" died, and everywhere I saw the signs of "men with growing wings."

And some of the boldest of "the coming race" were looking out upon the stars, and wondering if there were worlds to conquer there. And the federations which their poets sang of, now, were federations of the solar system, and the union of which they dreamed embraced Orion and the Pleiades. For they were gradually discovering

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